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**‘MAKING ITS OWN HISTORY’:
NEW ZEALAND HISTORICAL FICTION FOR CHILDREN,
1862-2008**

A thesis
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of the requirements for the degree
of
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ABSTRACT

This thesis considers historical fiction for children and young people dealing with New Zealand history from the arrival of the first Polynesian settlers to the end of the nineteenth century. It provides both a comprehensive survey of historical novels published between 1862 and the end of 2008, and an analysis of the way the same historical events and periods have been depicted in historical novels written at different times. Individual chapters discuss books set during specific historical periods or dealing with particular events – the pre-European period, early contact, nineteenth century immigration, the New Zealand Wars, the gold rushes, and the colonial period – in chronological order of publication. Since children's literature is particularly adept at reflecting and promoting the dominant ideas of the society in which it is produced, the chronological consideration of these texts reveals contemporary attitudes to such issues as race relations, gender roles, class, war and conflict, and concepts of national identity, as well as the way historical fiction has responded to societal changes since the 1860s.

The predominant themes of historical fiction set prior to 1900 are: the arrival of settlers in New Zealand; encounters with the country's indigenous inhabitants; the taming of the often hostile landscape; the assertion of the settlers' claims to 'belong' in their new land; and the establishment of New Zealand as a nation with distinctive characteristics. There are perceptible nuances and differences in the way these themes are discussed depending on the historical moment in which individual authors are writing. Novels of the Victorian period and early twentieth century reflect the imperialistic and evangelistic ethos of the time, and present the British settlers' right to colonize the land and the ensuing dispossession of Maori as largely unproblematic. Subsequent historical novels, particularly those written since the 1960s, offer a more inclusive version of New Zealand history, although the lack of historical fiction for children by Maori writers means that Eurocentric views of history continue to dominate, and that all representations of Maori and their history are mediated through Pakeha writers.

Shifts in social attitudes have resulted in changes in the treatment of Maori in historical novels for children, and similar changes have occurred in the portrayal of gender, class, and ethnicity. The passage of time has seen increased agency and a wider variety of roles allocated to Maori, female and working class characters, as well as greater ethnic diversity. Developments in New Zealand historiography are also reflected in fiction, although at times historical fiction prefigures written histories, or provides alternative views by depicting the experience of women, children and Maori, who often did not feature in conventional histories. While many historical novels for children, especially the earlier texts, are adventure stories set in the past and are not necessarily concerned with historical verisimilitude, an increasing number attempt to present authentic recreations of historical periods, including accounts of actual people and events, based on extensive research, and reinforced with peritextual material in the form of historical notes, bibliographies, maps and photographs.

The role of New Zealand historical fiction for children and young people has been not only to entertain young readers and inform them about their country's past, but to create and foster a sense of national identity.

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“The voyage is just finished. [...] It has been a pleasant time, I am sorry it is over.”¹

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¹ G. A. Henty, *Maori and Settler: A Story of the New Zealand War*, illus. by Alfred Pearse (London: Blackie and Son, 1891 [1911], p.155.

TABLE OF CONTENTS

Abstract		ii
Acknowledgements		iv
Table of Contents		v
List of Illustrations		vi
Introduction	‘A Little Land With No History’	1
Chapter One	The Shaping of the Past: Theoretical Background	9
Chapter Two	Moriori and Moa-hunters: Historical Fiction Set During the Pre-European Period	42
Chapter Three	Mariners, Muskets and Missionaries: Fiction Set During the Early Contact Period	66
Chapter Four	Imperialism, Evangelization and Antipodean Adventures: Immigrant Novels by Victorian and Early Twentieth Century Writers	109
Chapter Five	Young Settlers: Immigrant Novels by Twentieth and Twenty-First Century Authors	158
Chapter Six	Times of Turbulence: The New Zealand Wars in Junior Fiction	208
Chapter Seven	Dreams of Gold: Historical Novels about the Gold Rushes	266
Chapter Eight	‘A Place of Habitation rather than Islands of Exile’: Historical Novels of the Colonial Period	287
Conclusion	Choosing Our Pasts	342
Appendix One	Book Lists	351
Appendix Two	Tables and Graphs	364
Appendix Three	Summary of Author Survey Findings	369
Bibliography		373

LIST OF ILLUSTRATIONS

Map of New Zealand produced by Max Oulton	viii
Illustration by Douglas F. Maxted for <i>Rangatira</i> by Norman B. Tindale and Harold A. Lindsay	46
Illustration by unknown artist for <i>The Story of Kawau and the Moriori</i> by Arthur W. Stuckey	47
Illustration by Robyn Kahukiwa for <i>Ihaka and the Summer Wandering</i> by Joanna Orwin	49
Illustration by William Stobbs for <i>The Spaniards Came at Dawn</i> by Ronald Syme	69
Illustration by Russell Clark for <i>Pitama</i> by John L. Ewing	73
Illustrations by Anne Linton for <i>John and Hoani</i> by Valerie Grayland	74 & 75
Illustration by Ian Armour-Chelu for <i>The Adventures of Johnny Van Bart</i> by Cecil and Celia Manson	78
Illustrations supplied by National Oceanic and Atmospheric Administration for <i>Seal Boy</i> by Ken Catran	84
Illustrations by the author for <i>Lizzie, love</i> by Brenda Delamain	91
Illustrations by unknown artist for <i>The Redfords, an Emigrant Story</i> by Mrs George Cupples	112
Illustration by J. Jackson for <i>Distant Homes; or, the Graham Family in New Zealand</i> by J. E. Aylmer	113
Illustration by J. Jackson for <i>Holmwood, or the New Zealand Settler</i> by William Henry Giles Kingston	116
Illustrations by Gunston for <i>Amongst the Maoris</i> by Emilia Marryat	119 & 121
Illustrations by unknown artist for <i>Across Two Seas</i> by H. A. Forde	129 & 130
Illustrations by A. Rhind for <i>Doing and Daring</i> by Eleanor Stredder	131
Illustration by R. Coop (?) for <i>Waihoura</i> by W. H. G. Kingston	144
Illustration by Jane Paton for <i>The Emigrants</i> by Helen Sandall and Elizabeth Henniker Heaton	164
Illustration by Russell Clark for <i>They Came to Cook Strait</i> by David Jensen	168

Illustration by Gary Hebley for <i>Jessie Jenkin's Diary</i> by Kathryn Rountree	176
Illustration by W. Herbert Holloway for <i>In the Grip of the Hawk</i> by Reginald Horsley	216
Illustration by William Stobbs for <i>Gipsy Michael</i> by Ronald Syme	222
Illustration by the author for <i>The Children of the Forest</i> by A. H. Messenger	228
Illustration by Katarina Mataira for <i>The End of the Harbour</i> by Elsie Locke	231
Illustration by V. J. Livingstone for <i>Again, the Bugles Blow</i> by R. L. Bacon	233
Map by Libby Plumridge for <i>Journey Under Warning</i> by Elsie Locke	236
Illustrations by Alfred Pearse for <i>Maori and Settler</i> by G. A. Henty	247
Illustration by Gareth Floyd for <i>Shining Rivers</i> by Ruth Dallas	274
Illustration by Clyde Pearson for <i>South for Gold</i> by Margery Godfrey	284
Dust jacket by unknown artist for <i>Seventeen Chimneys</i> by Theodore Acland Harper	293
Illustration by Evelyn Clouston for <i>Young Jane</i> by Eileen Soper	295
Illustration by Elizabeth Sutherland for <i>The Greenstone Axe</i> by E. M. Ellin	300
Illustration by Laurence Broderick for <i>Uncle Matt's Mountain</i> by Ruth Park	326
Illustration by Garth Tapper for <i>The Children of Clearwater Bay</i> by E. M. Ellin	327
Table and graph of historical novels by date of publication	364
Table and graph of historical novels set prior to 1900 by topic/period	365
Table and graph of historical novels set during the twentieth century by topic/period	366
Table of historical novels by topic and date of publication	367
Graph of historical novels by topic and date of publication	368

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INTRODUCTION

From a little land with no history,
 (Making its own history, slowly and clumsily
 Piecing together this and that, finding the pattern, solving the problem,
 Like a child with a box of bricks).

(Katherine Mansfield, 'To Stanislaw Wyspianski')¹

Historical fiction for children and young adults is a significant but largely unexplored part of New Zealand's literary and cultural heritage. This country's past has been used extensively as the subject (or setting) of a considerable body of junior fiction, and our history continues to be rewritten and reinterpreted by creative writers for each new generation of young readers.

The first book for children which deals with New Zealand history, Mrs J. E. Aylmer's *Distant Homes: The Graham Family in New Zealand*, was published in 1862, and since that time historical novels have continued to appear in increasingly large numbers. The time periods covered range from the thirteenth century (the arrival of the first Polynesian settlers) to the second half of the twentieth century. The majority of the novels (ninety of around one hundred and sixty books) are set during the nineteenth century: most deal with the arrival of British and European colonists and their attempts to establish themselves in a new land, while others focus on the gold rushes and the New Zealand Wars. The passing of time has seen escalating numbers of novels set during the twentieth century; mainly up to, and including, the Second World War, but also a rising number based on more recent events, such as the Tangiwai and *Wahine* disasters, the 1981 Springbok tour and the sinking of the *Rainbow Warrior*. These books introduce young readers to important episodes from their country's past, and influence their attitudes to significant (and ongoing) issues.

For historical fiction to be written there must first be history. It is no coincidence that the genre of historical fiction originated in Britain, a nation with a long, varied, and contested history, rich in dramatic events and colourful characters. For Katherine Mansfield, looking back at her home country from Europe, New Zealand was a 'little land with no history'; and it is undeniable that the span of this country's recorded

history is very brief compared with the lengthy and well-documented annals of the European states. In fact, human settlement in New Zealand goes back only as far as the thirteenth century AD, during the period known in the northern hemisphere as the Middle Ages. Most of New Zealand's history, therefore, and certainly all for which there is written evidence, falls into the modern historical period, and it is still possible to provide a fairly detailed and comprehensive account of this country's entire history in one volume, as Michael King's 2003 *Penguin History of New Zealand* demonstrates. However, although New Zealand's history is comparatively brief in chronological terms, it is not devoid of interesting and dramatic events, related initially in the oral records of the country's Maori inhabitants, and, from the time of Abel Tasman's sighting of this country in 1642, in written records also. As King observes, the major themes of human history that are common to all ages and societies (such as mankind's need to find congenial and secure places to live and build cultures, human interactions with the environment, and competition for resources) are present in this country's history, with one significant difference:

What distinguishes New Zealand's history from that of other human societies is that these themes have been played out in a more intensive manner, and at a more accelerated pace, than almost anywhere else on Earth. For this reason, their course and consequences have interest for human history as a whole.²

The way these themes have been played out has been influenced not only by the 'extraordinarily compressed'³ nature of this country's history, but also by its distinctive geographical features. New Zealand's position in the South Pacific far from other land masses has meant that until comparatively recently it could be reached only by lengthy and difficult sea voyages, engendering a feeling of isolation from the rest of the world. When the Maori, and later, European, settlers arrived in New Zealand, they faced the problem of trying to create new homes in an often inhospitable and geologically unstable environment, where earthquakes and volcanic activity were (and still are) common. Although the European colonists tried to remake the land in the image of their countries of origin (so much so that 'human-sponsored modification of landscapes which had taken place over twenty centuries in Europe and four in North America had occurred in New Zealand in only one century'⁴) they were unable to alter the fundamental geology. Consequently, natural

disasters such as the Tarawera eruption, the Napier earthquake, and the Tangiwai lahar continue to feature as significant occurrences in this country's history.

Despite its isolation, New Zealand has been affected by international events such as economic cycles (for example, the 1930s Depression) and global conflicts; indeed, New Zealand's participation in the World Wars has been instrumental in the development of a sense of national identity. Other equally formative political and social events are unique to New Zealand; for example, the Treaty of Waitangi and the ongoing disputes about its meaning, and the New Zealand Wars of the nineteenth century.

New Zealand, then, has a distinctive and increasingly well-documented history. Apart from its intrinsic interest, a knowledge of the past is important for all manner of political, social and cultural reasons. Few would disagree that all New Zealanders should be aware of the historical events which have shaped this country, and which continue to influence the way we live today. Children, in particular, need to be introduced to aspects of their country's past in order to understand the society in which they live. A certain amount of New Zealand history is taught in a formal manner, in schools or through educational resources like the *School Journal*; while some is transmitted informally by other sources, such as family members or friends, or, in what is often seen as an increasingly post-literate society, through visual media such as film and television, or the internet. One of the most important sources of historical information, however, and arguably one of the most influential, is historical fiction.

For many young readers, historical novels are their first introduction to the history of their country. Historical fiction, therefore, is significant not just for the literary value of the texts, but for the information it conveys about the past, and the impression it creates in the mind of the reader. Historical novels play an important role in transmitting to young readers ideas of their country's past: ideas about nationhood; national and cultural identity; historical events and personalities; and the significance of past events. Unlike non-fiction history texts, which are presumed by readers to be factually accurate and based on verifiable data, novels are not constrained by the

same imperatives of accuracy and reliance on historical evidence. The need to provide narrative shape and interesting characters may lead writers to change facts to suit the exigencies of the story, or to combine real and fictional elements, such as placing invented characters in an historically authentic setting. Even where novels do attempt to convey factual information about historical events, they present and interpret these events in such a way as to imply certain values and meaning. This is, of course, also true of non-fiction histories, which are written as narratives and reflect the historians' preoccupations; history is now accepted as an ongoing and contested discourse with no final claims to impartiality or objectivity. In the words of historian Judith Binney, 'The "telling of history", whether it be oral or written, is not and never has been neutral. It is always a reflection of the priorities of the narrators and their perceptions of their world.'⁵

However, quite apart from the fact that children generally read historical novels rather than history texts, young readers are more likely to absorb historical information when it is presented as part of an exciting story with appealing characters of their own age. As Joan Aiken, the author of many distinguished children's books, including a number of historical novels, observes: 'I acknowledge that one can't learn all one's history through fiction. But fiction – the fact implanted in a story – does have a way of becoming knit into the mental processes much more easily, much more permanently, than facts on their own, unrelated, ever can.'⁶ New Zealand historian and author Elsie Locke also sees an important role for historical fiction:

History cannot be taught through fiction which at best illuminates only a fragment of the past. But these fragments may kindle a deeper interest, and reveal history as concerned with real people living lives both like, and unlike, our own. Fiction also has a powerful bearing on the shaping of attitudes towards problems with their roots in history. It can perpetuate misconceptions and prejudices; or it can explode those misconceptions and provide a more just perspective.⁷

Historical fiction, by focusing on people's daily lives, can also give readers a greater sense of what life was like in the past than most academic histories; Jock Phillips notes in his 'Reflections on 100 Years of New Zealand Historiography' that there has been 'a continuing failure to employ the whole range of approaches open to the historian in order to evoke the history of a culture in all its richness – its smells, its tastes, its fashions, its rituals, its words.'⁸ Writers of historical fiction are well placed

to evoke the smells, tastes, fashions, rituals, and words of earlier times, and they thus create a particular version of the past which is likely to influence (or even create) the reader's perception of that period.⁹ The impression of the past created by historical fiction is particularly relevant in books for children. Not only are young readers more impressionable than adults and readier to identify with the characters in the books they read, they are also unlikely to have much (if any) prior historical knowledge, so they will be unaware of ways in which historical evidence may have been modified or distorted, and their first impressions can prove remarkably resistant to change.¹⁰

One of the salient characteristics of books for children is, as English critic Julia Briggs has noted, their 'general obligation to instruct, and in particular to teach the child about his [sic] place in society'; and, as a result, 'children's fictions express with particular clarity their society's sense of itself and its structures, as well as its justification of those structures.'¹¹ Although historical fiction is set in the past, it inevitably reflects the society in which it is written; the more so because the books' historical elements are dependent on historiography which is itself the product of its time. In the words of Australian critic Ern Finniss:

Given that authors, even the most objective of historians, are affected by the spirit of their own times and see the past in terms of the present, it is as well to bear in mind the need to reserve judgment on all that suggests that it is a factual narrative. [...] Authors at the time of writing cannot entirely divorce themselves from the influences of contemporary attitudes, philosophies, values, mores, politics, and their own ethnicity – their current cultural milieu.¹²

This thesis analyses the way the same historical events and periods have been depicted in historical novels written at different times, thereby exposing the 'cultural milieu' and ideologies of the society in which the texts were produced in relation to such issues as race relations, gender roles, class, and concepts of national identity, as well as the way historical fiction has responded to societal changes.

Tony Watkins has pointed out that:

The stories we tell our children, the narratives we give them to make sense of cultural experience, constitute a kind of mapping, maps of meaning that enable our children to make sense of the world. They contribute to children's sense of identity, an identity that is simultaneously personal and social: narratives, we might say, shape the way children find a 'home' in the world.¹³

According to Watkins, one of the meanings of ‘home’ which has ‘a powerful effect in shaping our children’s identity through the cultural imagination, is constructed through the images we supply and the stories we tell of the land in which we live: our “homeland”’.¹⁴ The stories of our homeland told in New Zealand historical fiction for children and young people contribute to their sense of identity, firstly, by positioning young readers as citizens of New Zealand; and secondly, by promulgating (desirable) qualities which are seen as defining the national character. The title of the first New Zealand historical novel for children, *Distant Homes*, is prescient, as these books are implicated in placing their young protagonists and readers as ‘at home’ in this country, even though their origins are ‘distant’ – ‘Hawaiki’ in the case of the Maori colonists, and Europe (predominantly Britain) in the case of most of the later settlers. New Zealand historical fiction describes and participates in the process by which this country becomes, in Peter Gibbons’ phrase, ‘a place of habitation rather than islands of exile’.¹⁵ This thesis foregrounds some of the strategies used by novelists to situate their protagonists as ‘belonging’ in New Zealand (often at the expense of those who arrived before them), and also identifies ways in which they seek to establish a sense of national identity through promoting New Zealand as a country with distinctive qualities.

To date there has been very little academic research in the field of New Zealand children’s literature, and no critical material specifically addressing the subject of New Zealand historical fiction for children has been published.¹⁶ This thesis provides a comprehensive survey of the field and also contributes to an understanding of how New Zealand’s past has been, and continues to be, researched, interpreted and reinvented by writers for children. The first chapter will discuss the theoretical background of the topic, including the genre of historical fiction, relevant historical methods and theories, and the development of New Zealand’s historical resources. It will also consider issues specific to the topic of this thesis and outline the parameters of the research. The following seven chapters will examine New Zealand historical novels for children set during specific periods or dealing with particular events of this country’s past – the pre-European period, early contact, nineteenth century immigration, the New Zealand Wars, the gold rushes, and the colonial period. The

novels about immigration to New Zealand will be divided into two chapters, one dealing with books by English authors published during the nineteenth and early twentieth century, and the other with those written subsequently by New Zealand writers.

Although it was my intention to include in this survey historical novels set during the twentieth century the volume of material has made this impossible. I have therefore chosen the turn of the century as a cut-off date, as the themes of creating ‘a place of habitation’ which preoccupy historical fiction set prior to 1900 are less evident in novels with a twentieth century setting; there is a shift from what Gibbons calls ‘the literature of invasion’ to ‘the literature of occupation’.¹⁷ While questions of national identity are still important, texts set after 1900 are not as concerned with staking the claims of their young protagonists to being bona fide ‘New Zealanders’; rather, they explore aspects of the New Zealand character in relation to specific episodes such as the First and Second World Wars, the Depression, and more recent events such as the Wahine disaster. A list of historical novels set during the twentieth century arranged according to subject is included in Appendix One.

Chapters Two to Eight of this thesis will each comprise a brief outline of the history (and, where pertinent, the historiography) of the period followed by a survey of all books set during this time, considered in chronological order of publication, and focusing on historical and literary aspects. The second part of each chapter analyses the texts in terms of their ideological implications, and how these relate to the time the books were written. The Conclusion will summarise the varying ways that writers have ‘pieced together this and that’ from the box of bricks of New Zealand history, and offer an appraisal of the pattern of this country’s past they have presented to its young readers.

Note: I have used current Maori orthography in this thesis, except where I am quoting from a text, in which case I use the spelling of the text. For example, ‘Maori’ appears as ‘Maoris’ or ‘Maories’; pa as pah(s); Hauhau as Hau Hau(s) or Hau-hau(s); and there are numerous variations on tribal names.

¹ *An Anthology of New Zealand Poetry in English*, ed. by Jenny Bornholdt, Gregory O'Brien and Mark Williams (Auckland: Oxford University Press, 1997), p.474.

² Michael King, *The Penguin History of New Zealand* (Auckland: Penguin, 2003), p.26.

³ King, p.9.

⁴ King, p.24.

⁵ Judith Binney, 'Maori Oral Narrative, Pakeha Written Texts: Two Forms of Telling History', in *The Shaping of History: Essays from The New Zealand Journal of History*, ed. by Judith Binney (Wellington: Bridget Williams Books, 2001), pp.2-14 (p.14).

⁶ Joan Aiken, 'Interpreting the Past', *Children's Literature in Education*, 16 (1985), 67-83 (p.77).

⁷ Elsie Locke, 'Children's Historical Fiction in New Zealand', *Historical News* 32 (1976), 7-10, 16 (p.7).

⁸ Jock Phillips, 'Of Verandahs and Fish and Chips and Footie on Saturday Afternoon: Reflections on 100 Years of New Zealand Historiography', in *The Shaping of History: Essays from The New Zealand Journal of History*, ed. by Judith Binney (Wellington: Bridget Williams Books, 2001), 320-336 (p.332.)

⁹ Joan Aiken makes this point in the article already quoted: 'I think that an imaginative grasp of the past – a real feeling of what the past felt and sounded and smelt like – can only be acquired from stories, from fiction or truly perceptive biography. To say "the peasants lived in squalor" is to make a flat and unmemorable statement. The reader needs to see an actual peasant lying down in a mixture of mud and straw, by the side of his pig.' Aiken, p.75.

¹⁰ According to an article published in the journal *Psychological Science* by Andrew Butler of Washington University, St Louis, United States (as reported in the *New Zealand Herald*), researchers have found that children who watch historical films are more likely to believe the film story, even if it is incorrect, than what they are told by text books or teachers. Even if they have read the correct version, children remember what was in the film rather than the textbook.

Richard Alleyne, 'Hollywood "History" trap in the classroom', *New Zealand Herald*, 8 August 2009, p.A23.

Although this study concentrated on historical films, I suggest that the same is likely to apply to historical novels.

¹¹ Julia Briggs, 'Reading Children's Books' in *Essays in Criticism*, Vol.XXXVIX, No.1 (1989), 1-17 (p.9).

¹² Ern J. Finnis, 'Australia's Social History: Understanding Our Past', in *Australian Children's Literature: An Exploration of Genre and Theme*, by John Elwall Foster, Ern J. Finnis and Maureen Nimon (Wagga Wagga: L.I.S. Press, 1995), pp.105-120 (p.105).

¹³ Tony Watkins, 'Cultural Studies, New Historicism and Children's Literature', in *Literature for Children: Contemporary Criticism* ed. by Peter Hunt (London: Routledge, 2001), pp.173-195 (p.183).

¹⁴ Watkins, p.184.

¹⁵ Peter Gibbons, 'Non-Fiction', in *The Oxford History of New Zealand Literature in English*, ed. by Terry Sturm, 2nd edn, (Auckland: Oxford University Press, 1998), pp.31-118 (p.55).

¹⁶ Three chapters of Betty Gilderdale's *A Sea Change: 145 Years of New Zealand Junior Fiction* (published in 1982) deal with historical novels, but because the book is a comprehensive survey of all New Zealand children's literature from 1833 to 1978 the treatment of individual novels is necessarily brief. The many children's books published in New Zealand since 1978 are obviously not covered, though Gilderdale does include books up to 1996 in her chapter on children's literature in the *Oxford History of New Zealand Literature*. Once again, the necessity of providing a general survey of the literature from the earliest publications to the present day, along with space constraints, allows only a brief summary of major books and authors rather than an in-depth analysis. Diane Hebley's *The Power of Place: Landscape in New Zealand Children's Fiction, 1970-1989* includes a number of historical novels, but discusses them only in the context of their geographical setting, and is limited to books published between 1970 and 1989.

¹⁷ Gibbons, 'Non-Fiction', p.38 and p.55. Gibbons gives the dates of 1840-1890 for the 'literature of invasion', and 1890-1930 for the 'literature of occupation', but I feel the turn of the century is more appropriate in the context of historical fiction for children.

CHAPTER ONE

THE SHAPING OF THE PAST: THEORETICAL BACKGROUND

History is the shaping of the past by those living in the present.¹

In this introductory chapter I will discuss the development of historical fiction as a genre, firstly in general terms, and then dealing more specifically with New Zealand historical fiction and historical fiction for children. Historical novels are based on the historical record, so I will examine the resources available to writers; starting with a survey of relevant historical methods and theories, followed by an outline of the ways New Zealand history has been researched and recorded since the 1850s. I will then discuss literary considerations, such as setting and focalization, which are pertinent to historical novels, and conclude the chapter by reviewing the role of historical fiction in disseminating particular ideologies.

The historical novel as a distinct literary genre emerged towards the end of the eighteenth century, when writers started to draw on the historical information collected by antiquarians to provide settings for works of fiction set in the past. The most popular and influential practitioner of the genre was Sir Walter Scott, whose series of historical novels (beginning with *Waverley* in 1814) established a pattern that was widely imitated and set the standard by which other historical novels were judged. The Marxist literary critic Georg Lukács, in his seminal work *The Historical Novel*, goes so far as to identify Sir Walter Scott as the originator of the genre. Lukács examines the attributes of Scott's novels which distinguish them from both earlier historical works and from the realistic eighteenth century novels, and thus identifies what he regards as the essential qualities of the classical historical novel. These features include: historical faithfulness to social and political circumstances; characters whose psychology is true to their time; the use of authentic details; a focus on ordinary people and human relationships rather than the great dramas of world history; and a degree of 'necessary anachronism' which:

consists [...] simply in allowing his characters to express feelings and thoughts about real, historical relationships in a much clearer way than the actual men and women of the time would have done. But the content of these feelings and

thoughts, their relation to their real object is always historically and socially correct.²

Another of Scott's achievements praised by Lukács is his depiction of a 'middle way' between the opposing social and political forces of the historical periods he deals with. He achieves this by choosing as his hero a 'more or less mediocre, average English gentleman'³ who occupies a neutral position between the opposing forces and whose task is to bring these extremes into contact with one another. Historical crises are therefore described in terms of human relationships and the impact they have on people's personal lives. While real historical figures and events feature in Scott's novels, they are not central; it is the lives of ordinary people that are most significant. According to Lukács, this 'human-historical portrayal [...] makes history live'⁴, and also allows the patriotic author to celebrate his country's progress: 'Scott sees and portrays the complex and intricate path which led to England's national greatness and to the formation of the national character'.⁵ Scott's interest in the lives of ordinary people, and his emphasis on evoking a sense of nationhood and on the development of the national character, have continued to be important elements in historical fiction, and are characteristic of New Zealand historical fiction for children as well.

Subsequent critics have questioned some of Lukács' conclusions. For example, Elizabeth Wesseling maintains that while historical fiction is a vehicle for conveying historical knowledge, it does not have the same imperatives as historiography of absolute accuracy and modes of expression; in other words, as historical novels are works of fiction, inventing details to make a better story is not only permissible but desirable. Historical novelists are not at liberty, however, to give their imagination completely free rein, particularly when dealing with comparatively recent or well-documented historical events, as this brings into play:

a specific tension [...] which is one of the characteristics of the historical novel proper. The genre is not only subject to the constraints of verisimilitude and plausibility, but also of the foreknowledge which the novelist may expect his readers to possess of the historical characters and events that figure in his work.⁶

I would argue that this tension is less evident in historical fiction for children, whose knowledge of even the recent past is likely to be more limited than that of adult

readers, and this would imply a concomitant obligation on the part of the author to be as accurate as possible, or at least to signal where he or she has diverged from the historical record. As John Stephens notes: ‘The distinction between what is real and what is fictive is often difficult for the young reader to make, so the authority with which fictive events are invested by their interaction with actual events will be intensified.’⁷

Wesseling traces the way historical novels have changed over time, and identifies three distinct but interrelated phases in the development of the genre. The first stage, the emergence of a clearly delineated type, is dominated by the works of Scott; while the second, in which writers consciously imitate the primary type with only minor variations (such as a didactic element), consists of novels written in direct emulation of Scott’s oeuvre. Wesseling calls this second stage of the historical novel ‘the classical model’, and it remains the most common form of the genre. The majority of historical fiction for children conforms to the classical model, and in fact many of the features Wesseling mentions are particularly associated with books for children. Children’s books, whether historical or not, tend to be concerned with the daily lives of ordinary individuals, especially children; and historical novels for children often concentrate on recreating the way of life of a specific period, as the *Cambridge Guide to Children’s Books in English* notes:

Generally, historical novelists for children are less concerned with depicting major historical events and figures than those for adults; more frequently, they emphasise what it was like to live and grow up in another era, the cultural differences between past and present, and the living continuity between them.⁸

The didactic element is also very significant, given that books for children have always been seen as important vehicles for transmitting society’s values to the younger generation. As Peter Hunt points out, ‘It is arguably impossible for a children’s book (especially one being read by a child) not to be educational or influential in some way; it cannot help but reflect an ideology and, by extension, didacticism.’⁹

Wesseling identifies a third stage in the development of the historical novel, during which the genre is put to new uses, often in the form of parody or burlesque. Authors of historical fiction for children have not been influenced to any large extent by the postmodernist innovations of the genre (possibly because these require a high degree of sophistication and historical knowledge on the part of the reader), although ‘alternate histories’¹⁰ have been written by authors such as Joan Aiken. Aiken describes this method of writing historical fiction as ‘reshaping the course of history to suit the writer’s own ends, using the past as a kind of flexible medium, or springboard, adhering to the spirit of history and to the letter only as much as may be convenient’.¹¹ Jack Lasenby is one of the few New Zealand writers for children to have produced alternate versions of history; for example his *Aunt Effie* series, in which historical elements are included in a contemporary narrative, rewrites New Zealand history for comic effect. These books fall outside the parameters of this thesis.

Lukács and Wesseling provide useful background information on historical fiction as a genre, but there is little material available related specifically to New Zealand historical fiction. Lawrence Jones’ chapter on ‘The Novel’ in the *Oxford History of New Zealand Literature in English* does not consider historical fiction as a separate genre but discusses a number of adult historical novels in their historical context. Jones identifies some common themes; for example, he points out that the dominant theme of novels written during the Pioneer Period (1861–1889) and the Late Colonial Period (1890–1934) is ‘nation building’, that is, converting the ‘wilderness’ of the New Zealand bush into a productive ‘Pastoral Paradise’. This is regarded as the inevitable outcome of human evolutionary development which ‘provides a goal for the process of colonization, and justifies the costs, including the regrettable but necessary destruction of the bush and the Maori as well as the human costs for the settlers’.¹² Novels of the Provincial Period (1935–1964) increasingly question this attitude, and tend to criticise New Zealand society as dull, conformist and puritanical, often through the device of having a sensitive protagonist in conflict with a repressive community. The Post-Provincial Period (from 1965) is ‘rich in historical novels in a variety of modes, from the traditional romance to the post-modern play with history, for an important part of the contemporary consciousness is an awareness of the New

Zealand past as history, with its own myths, dreams and disappointments'.¹³ Many of these novels question the view of history presented in previous novels, and offer a revisionist view by writing from a feminist or Maori perspective. This writing is influenced by the social changes of the 1960s and 1970s: 'increasing affluence [...], the move to a consumer society, increasing urbanisation and suburbanisation, the sexual revolution, the feminist revolution, the growth of racial and cultural consciousness, the emergence of a more distinctive youth subculture, and changes in family patterns'.¹⁴ The 1980s saw further changes brought about by, among other things, economic factors, changed patterns of immigration, and technological advances, which 'gave the novelists material very different from the more narrow, monocultural society of the previous period'.¹⁵ The trends identified by Jones in historical novels for adults are mirrored to some extent in historical fiction for children (which are influenced by the same social changes), in particular the 'nation building' theme of the earlier novels, and the revisionist views presented in more recent texts with their greater sensitivity to indigenous and feminist viewpoints.

Jones considers these issues in more detail in the *Journal of New Zealand Literature* 9 (1991) which features a Symposium on Historical Fiction. He notes an increased interest in history and a consequent upsurge in the publication of (adult) historical novels in New Zealand during the 1980s. Jones concedes that historical fiction raises 'inevitable arguments':

The novelists, with their sense of mode, genre, and narrative needs, and with their own personal visions of reality, will inevitably treat history in a way that upsets some literal-minded readers. Further, as narrative always implies the interpretation of events, and since such an interpretation of history inevitably involves the politics of gender and class and culture and, ultimately, the competing claims of truth, there can be no resolution of differences.¹⁶

Another contributor to the Symposium, Ralph Crane, states that: 'Traditionally, New Zealand history has been written from the perspective of the colonizers, from a Eurocentric or Pakeha perspective which has often paid scant regard to Maori versions of that shared experience. The same has been true of much New Zealand historical fiction, too.'¹⁷ Crane notes that some recent New Zealand historical novels, such as those of Maurice Shadbolt, 'challenge the hegemony of the Eurocentric versions of history'.¹⁸ This does not make their version of history more truthful or

objective, however: ‘The colonial historians of the nineteenth century successfully tamed history to serve their imperial agenda, just as more recently revisionist historians have tamed history and made it subservient to their different political agendas.’¹⁹ The same applies to New Zealand historical novels for children, where the imperialistic and evangelizing novels of the Victorian period have been succeeded in the late twentieth and early twenty-first centuries by books which seek to give greater (and possibly sometimes anachronistic) agency to female and Maori characters, reflecting modern concerns rather than the historical record.

Although historical fiction for children has a great deal in common with that for adults, the historical novel for children has evolved as a separate genre. Many of the classics of children’s literature, from Robert Louis Stevenson’s *Kidnapped* onwards, are historical novels, and the genre continues to be held in high critical esteem. This contrasts with the status of historical fiction for adults; as the *Concise Oxford Companion to English Literature* notes, ‘the attraction of the form has now greatly declined, except in the popular market’.²⁰ Historical fiction for children can trace its origins back to Scott’s novels, which were often read by children and widely imitated by writers of books for children as well as for adults. Victorian writers for children frequently used historical settings simply to provide a colourful backdrop for adventure stories or for moral tales, with little regard for accuracy, but during the late nineteenth and early twentieth centuries, writers such as Stevenson, Rudyard Kipling and E. Nesbit produced exceptional works of historical fiction, with Kipling and Nesbit introducing a sub-genre which has proved very popular in children’s literature – the time-slip fantasy. After a period of stagnation, the genre was revitalised in the 1930s, a process which was initiated in the United States by Laura Ingalls Wilder’s autobiographical *Little House* series, and in England by Geoffrey Trease’s historical novels written from a left-wing perspective. These heralded what has been referred to as a ‘golden age’ in British historical fiction for children during the 1940s and 1950s, with authors such as Cynthia Harnett, Henry Treece, Hester Burton, and Rosemary Sutcliff producing novels which told exciting but credible stories in the context of well-researched and imaginatively reconstructed historical periods.²¹

While the popularity of the genre fluctuates, historical novels for children continue to be produced, and recent years have seen a resurgence in numbers.

In New Zealand the juvenile historical fiction genre has developed independently of Britain, but it has analogies with other countries with a similar history. Mary Rubio notes in the *Encyclopedia of Post-Colonial Literatures in English* that ‘the countries of the white diaspora (Australia, Canada, New Zealand) shared strong parallels in the development of their respective children’s literatures’;²² and in *Unsettling Narratives; Post-colonial Readings of Children’s Literature*, Clare Bradford also sees affinities between ‘children’s texts produced in the former settler colonies of New Zealand, Australia, Canada, and the United States’, many of which ‘similarly enact a repression of memory concerning colonization’.²³ Her analysis of these texts from a postcolonial perspective reveals similarities between New Zealand children’s literature and that of the other three countries, as well as offering useful strategies for a postcolonial reading of children’s books (some of which I have applied to the New Zealand historical novels considered in this thesis). The development of New Zealand children’s literature has much in common with that of Australia, as attested by the opening paragraphs of the brief surveys of the literature of these two countries in *Children’s Literature: An Illustrated History*:

The two themes that dominate Australian children’s literature in the nineteenth century and are still influential today are the settler’s reaction to an environment different from Europe and their contact with the Aboriginal population of the new country. These themes were played out in books of adventure which featured the spectacular aspects of the landscape (flood, fire, drought, the unusual flora and fauna) and books designed to encourage emigration or help settlers adjust to new conditions and live comfortably in a new land.²⁴

Betty Gilderdale’s comments on early New Zealand children’s literature are very similar to those of Michael Stone quoted above:

Ever since 1833, when the first book set in New Zealand was published anonymously (*Stories about Many Things: Founded on Facts*), two recurrent themes have dominated New Zealand literature for children. They are a preoccupation with the indigenous Maori people and with the Land itself. Both were totally new experiences for the early – mainly British – settlers. The Maori culture was as alien as the steep forested mountains, the cascading rivers, the smoking volcanoes, and the ever-present danger of earthquakes. This beautiful but

wild terrain contrasted sharply with the ancient and largely benign landscape they had left behind them.²⁵

Early Canadian children's literature has a similar obsession with the landscape; Rod McGillis notes the prevalence of 'stories of survival in a harsh and mysterious land', but there is little mention of interaction with the indigenous people.²⁶

Early Australian and New Zealand children's literature had many other features in common, and Stone's description of nineteenth century books for children is equally applicable to both countries:

As the nineteenth century advanced, the exotic and unusual nature of the country attracted overseas writers, many of whom never left home. Until the 1890s they showed Australia as a place attractive to settlers, with the promise of sure reward for hard work, as a place for exotic and dangerous adventure and a place which had endless possibilities for missionary zeal in rehabilitating fellow whites or for converting the black man.²⁷

As Maureen Nimmon has noted, the description of the countryside in these books was perfunctory, and the indigenous people were depicted either as 'generic black villains to test the mettle of brave British lads',²⁸ or (in Bradford's words) as 'objects of evangelical projects'.²⁹ Books such as these account for a significant number of the nineteenth century children's books set in New Zealand as well, including the first historical novels for children. Later developments in Australian historical fiction also have parallels in this country, including the emergence of distinctive forms. Ern Finniss describes three categories of Australian social history; firstly, 'time capsule texts' written in the past;³⁰ secondly, narratives set in the past which are interesting chiefly for the 'recalled setting and the recollected or regenerated general spirit of the times';³¹ and, thirdly, 'serious historical fiction [whose] object is to produce a research-based narrative that deals in an accurate and verifiable way with specific times and places, and involves credible characters embroiled in actual historical events'.³² All of these categories have emerged in New Zealand historical fiction for children also.

Historical fiction differs from much other fiction in that it has a factual basis, and that its writers are (generally) attempting to present an authentic account of past events,

people, or society. The *Cambridge Guide to Children's Books in English* sees this as the defining quality of historical fiction: 'A historical novel is not merely a story set in the past but a story which attempts, with the aid of scholarly research, to reconstruct and bring to life the events, culture and Zeitgeist of the period'.³³ The 'scholarly research' undertaken by authors draws, to a greater or lesser extent, on the work of historians, but this does not, in itself, imply that the information is accurate and impartial. The idea of history as a collection of incontrovertible facts, 'an orderly and meaningful process with an inherent dynamics and purpose',³⁴ came to be challenged during the twentieth century. According to historian R. G. Collingwood, 'Every present has a past of its own, and every imaginative reconstruction of the past aims at reconstructing the past of this present, the present in which the act of imagination is going on as here and now perceived.'³⁵ History, therefore, is constantly being reinterpreted and rewritten according to the ideological and intellectual preconceptions of the historian and the time in which the writing is taking place.

Although it is unlikely that many of the authors of historical fiction are aware of the developments in historical studies and theory, they draw on the work of historians for the factual elements of their novels. Some knowledge of the basic concepts of historical theory is therefore helpful in approaching the historical component of these novels. According to historians Anna Green and Kathleen Troup, the most influential school of historical thought is empiricism, which is based on careful evaluation and authentication of the primary source material; this is not, however, as simple as it sounds, as records which survive into the present tend to be incomplete and generally reflect a narrow range of perspectives. Most documentary evidence is created and preserved by the elite of society, a fact which is of particular relevance to writers of children's historical fiction, as the experiences of children are unlikely to have been recorded and will have to be reconstructed by writers. Other principles of empirical history are impartial research devoid of *a priori* beliefs and prejudices, and the inductive method of reasoning. However, the process of relating historical 'facts' as a narrative contains explicit analysis because the historian must decide how to arrange the evidence, and the same evidence may be interpreted differently by different historians. Empiricism has therefore been challenged by relativism – 'the

belief that absolute truth is unattainable and that all statements about history are connected or relative to the position of those who made them'.³⁶ Historians are seen to write about the past in the context of contemporary concerns and perspectives. This has been reinforced in recent years by the influence of postmodernism.

From this perspective, the orthodox historical preoccupation with facts about the past becomes redundant, because there is no independent reality outside language. The historian is always constrained by the limitations of his or her own intellectual world, from which the concepts and categories of thought are invariably drawn. Postmodernists argue that while language shapes our reality, it does not necessarily reflect it.³⁷

As noted in the Introduction, one of the issues this thesis will be addressing is the way the same historical events are presented in historical novels written at different times, to ascertain how the authors' contemporary concerns and perspectives shape the way these events are presented to child readers.

Other areas of twentieth-century historical theory are also relevant to historical fiction; they include psychohistory ('the use of psychoanalysis to aid our understanding of historical personalities, groups or trends'³⁸); historical sociology, which is concerned with social structures and processes; and anthropology. The two major schools of thought in anthropology – social anthropology which seeks evidence of social patterns in human culture, and cultural anthropology, which interprets culture at the level of ideas learned by individuals – both adopt a position of cultural relativism, and an holistic interpretative approach. Since it is difficult to apply an holistic approach to large or diverse societies, many historians influenced by the anthropological approach have favoured microhistory, placing small communities, single events, or even one individual under minute scrutiny.

In this sense, anthropology is immensely influential in redirecting historians' attention away from the public, political sphere of human action towards private, daily life. Rediscovering old sources, including oral history and oral tradition, and re-reading others, historians began to investigate sexuality, marriage and childhood, as well as magic, myth and ritual.³⁹

Anthropology's emphasis on small communities or individuals and on private daily life rather than the political sphere, its use of oral traditions, and its interest in childhood, are also aspects of historical fiction for children.

Ethnohistory is another area which has a bearing on historical fiction, particularly that of colonial countries such as New Zealand. Some ethnohistorians work at the point of contact between societies or cultures and as a result the orthodox narratives of colonial history have been called into question. Historians must read ‘against the grain’ to uncover the perspective of the colonized peoples. ‘It is, perhaps, this enduring problem of perspective, between that of the emic (the insiders’ viewpoint) as opposed to the etic (the outsiders’) that has led to the development of postcolonial history.’⁴⁰ The problem of perspective is particularly relevant in the context of historical fiction, where readers are likely to accept the viewpoint of the focalizing character. Ethnohistory and anthropology are therefore pertinent to historical fiction, involving, as they do, the inclusion of previously marginalised people within the historical record; a recognition of the tensions between, and implications of, emic and etic perspectives; an emphasis on the importance of understanding the social structures within which individuals live; and a greatly enriched historiography of daily life, family, myth and ritual. These issues are central to many of the historical novels this thesis will be considering.

Another historical approach which is of particular relevance to historical fiction is that of narrative; the way the source material, a sequence of events over a period in time, is arranged into a single coherent story with a beginning, middle and end. The idea that there is a clear distinction between historical narratives, based upon facts, and fictional narratives, utilising imagination,

has been challenged in the late twentieth century as the essentially constructed nature of historical narrative has been subjected to closer, and critical, scrutiny. Historians must now consider the assertion that our representation of the past has no greater claim to truth than that of novelists and poets, and that our narratives are literary artefacts, produced according to the rules of genre and style.⁴¹

The effect of narrative structure on the way history is presented in both ‘histories’ and in historical fiction is something I will be considering in relation to individual texts. This is particularly apposite in fiction for children, as strongly plotted narratives are an essential feature in books for young readers.

I also make use of the concept of different levels of historical narrative as defined by Allan Megill in *A New Philosophy of History*:

It seems useful to think of [narrative] ‘coherence’ as occupying four distinct levels of conceptualization. These are: (1) *narrative proper*; (2) *master narrative* or synthesis, which claims to offer the authoritative account of some particular segment of history; (3) *grand narrative*, which claims to offer the authoritative account of history generally; and (4) *metanarrative* (most commonly, belief in God or in a rationality somehow immanent in the world), which serves to justify the grand narrative.⁴²

As indicated in the Introduction, I will be discussing the ‘narrative proper’ of individual texts in the first part of each chapter, while in the second part I will consider each text’s construction of the ‘master narrative’ of the period covered in that chapter. The Conclusion will include my analysis of the ‘grand narrative’ of New Zealand historical fiction for children. As Rowland Weston explains, ‘Grand narratives propose that there is an underlying mechanism or structure in the story of human affairs which shapes, constrains, enables and, some would say, *determines* certain outcomes and not others.’⁴³ Given the perceived need for children’s stories to have a happy ending, it is to be expected that the grand narrative of most historical fiction for children will be one which is prevalent in modern Western cultures; that is, the idea that history on the whole is positive and progressive and that things continue to get better.

The issue of gender and history is also relevant to historical fiction. There are two major definitions of gender: ‘the cultural definitions of behaviour defined as appropriate to the sexes in a given society at a given time’, and ‘a constitutive element of social relationships based on perceived differences between the sexes and ... a primary way of signifying relationships of power’.⁴⁴ Green and Troup identify two strands of feminist analysis. One reflects the course of the feminist movement in general and tends to focus on women’s status and experience in the past. Early approaches were ‘mainly based on the premise that all women were essentially the same, and that, in effect, they shared the concerns of white middle-class women.’⁴⁵ In the second strand, ‘the historical dichotomy between men and women has drawn attention to the analytical potential of a variety of other dichotomies: nature/culture, work/family and public/private’.⁴⁶ However, Jeremy Black and Donald M. MacRaild

draw attention to the fact that gender history can be ahistorical and ideological, uncovering what is not there or conferring importance on what is of limited value. They stress that historians cannot rewrite the past to change the biases of past generations, or give women retrospective political importance which suits a feminist agenda but distorts history.⁴⁷ This is also an issue with historical fiction, and in subsequent chapters I will be examining historical novels to determine whether their depiction of female roles is ahistorical and ideologically driven.

Colonial and postcolonial theories of history are another area of particular relevance to New Zealand historical fiction. Nineteenth century colonialism justified the spread of Europeans throughout the world and their conquest of indigenous peoples on economic, cultural, religious and even evolutionary grounds. There was a widespread belief among the colonizing nations that they were racially superior and that it was their historical destiny to bring 'civilisation' to the less-developed parts of the globe. In the 'white settler states' (the United States of America, Argentina, Australia, Canada, New Zealand, South Africa and Uruguay), settlers generally treated the land they found as empty or unused and claimed it as their own, ignoring the rights of the indigenous population. Early works of historical fiction reflect these colonial views, while some of the more recent books are influenced by postcolonial attitudes, which question the experience of imperialism and colonialism and often reject previous historical accounts which narrated European expansion as largely unproblematic. Postcolonial histories include, or focus on, the perspectives of the previously marginalized colonized people and examine the continuing impact of colonialism. Another way of approaching postcolonial history is by considering 'subalterns' (that is, those of inferior rank, whether of class, caste, age, gender or any other way), whose experiences were very different from those of the colonists and the elite who wrote the previous histories. Children have traditionally been seen as of inferior rank, and historical novels which have children as protagonists could therefore come into the category of subaltern studies.

The term 'postcolonial' is relatively new, and has been questioned. For example, in the white settler states, including New Zealand, the Europeans did not leave, and the descendants of the original colonists remain dominant over the indigenous people.

Even in nations where the Europeans have departed, the imperial power still exerts influence over the former colony. The issue of who should write indigenous or postcolonial history is controversial. Should it be reconstructed only by indigenous scholars; in other words, does an emic (insider) perspective have greater merit than an etic (outsider) one? Can non-indigenous writers successfully reconstruct the experience of colonialism from an indigenous perspective? These are relevant questions for fiction as well. Clare Bradford's study of settler societies indicates that non-indigenous writers predominate as writers of fiction for children, so that:

Indigenous cultures and people are generally the objects of discourse and not their subjects. In the field of children's literature, one of the most important consequences is that Indigenous children rarely encounter texts produced within their own cultures, so that representations of Indigeneity are filtered through the perspectives of white culture. Nor are worthy intentions any guarantee that texts produced by white authors and illustrators are free of stereotyped or colonial views, since the ideologies of the dominant culture are so often accepted as normal and natural and are thus invisible.⁴⁸

Bradford argues that, while texts by indigenous writers are not necessarily free of 'stereotypes and colonial mythologies', they can afford their readers 'an appreciation of cultural difference and a realization that many ideologies that they had thought to be natural and universal are culturally constructed'.⁴⁹ However, Bradford notes that the relatively high proportion of Maori in New Zealand society 'does not necessarily result in children's texts that offer more enlightened and diverse representations of Maori culture, at least as far as mainstream texts are concerned'.⁵⁰ This is certainly the case with historical fiction, as there are currently no historical novels for children written by Maori authors. The issues faced by non-Maori writers attempting to give a Maori perspective of history are discussed later in the thesis.

Although there is an element of truth in Katherine Mansfield's description of New Zealand as 'a little land with no history', compared with other countries whose recorded history stretches back for many centuries, written histories of this country began to appear from as early as the 1850s. Since that time, New Zealand historians have continued 'making [their] own history, slowly and clumsily/ piecing together this and that, finding the pattern, solving the problem'; and, as a result, writers of historical novels set in New Zealand have had a number of sources to draw from. The entry on 'New Zealand' by Peter Gibbons in the *Encyclopedia of Historians and*

Historical Writing and his essay on ‘Non-Fiction’ in the *Oxford History of New Zealand Literature in English* provide a useful summary of writing about New Zealand history. Gibbons notes that from the very start:

Writing in and about New Zealand was [...] involved in the processes of colonization, in the implementation of European power, in the description and justification of the European presence as normative, and in the simultaneous implicit or explicit production of the indigenous peoples as alien or marginal. At the same time writing was instrumental in classifying, mythologizing, and gendering experience within New Zealand. There have been and are many important contestatory elements within this discourse. A major one is writing which ‘corrects’ the discourse of colonization by asserting the legitimacy, vitality and persistence of the indigenous peoples; another is writing by women which seeks to revalue those experiences eliminated, denigrated or misrepresented by male writers.⁵¹

Many of the historical novels for children considered in this thesis share the tendency of non-fiction works about New Zealand to treat the European presence as normative and marginalise the indigenous people. However, there are also significant ‘contestatory elements’, as nearly two thirds of these books are by female authors and they are written for and about children, thereby representing two of the groups whose experiences have been ‘eliminated, denigrated or misrepresented’ in writing by male writers. The experience of child protagonists is central to these texts, and many also specifically address the role of women in New Zealand society. The characteristics of women’s non-fiction writing identified by Gibbons could be equally well applied to historical novels for children:

Women’s writing is more concerned with people and their relationships than with national identity; the literary world of women writers is far more densely and variously populated than that of men; and New Zealand as a huge cultural artifact recedes or almost vanishes altogether in the verbal particularization of life.⁵²

One preoccupation of this thesis is to ascertain the extent to which the historical information in fiction for children accurately reflects the historical record at the time of writing. In this I have used the most reputable scholarly works currently available (while conscious of the partial, constructed and presentist dimension of all historical scholarship). The first substantial accounts of New Zealand’s beginnings and the colonial period, William Swainson’s *New Zealand and its Colonization* and A. S. Thomson’s *Story of New Zealand: Past and Present – Savage and Civilized*, were

published in 1859. Both describe the process of ‘civilizing’ the ‘savage’ Maori, and assume that the natives will be amalgamated with the dominant settlers. Attitudes towards Maori and to New Zealand itself gradually changed; by the 1890s New Zealand-born residents outnumbered immigrants, and there was an increased sense of New Zealand as ‘home’ (even though Britain remained ‘Home’ for many for several generations to come). Political and economic changes contributed to a growing sense of national identity, and European New Zealanders began to feel that their country was ‘perhaps not simply a ‘Brighter Britain’, but a distinctively special place and society’.⁵³ This affected the way people wrote about their country.

Hitherto, writers of non-fiction had emphasized contrasts between metropolitan norms and the alien New Zealand world. For many of the next generation of writers New Zealand would be a place of habitation rather than islands of exile. A considerable amount of non-fiction writing from the 1890s is concerned with fabricating New Zealand by creating an inventory of its phenomena. The ‘native-born’ colonists were trying to depict themselves as the indigenous people. To ‘belong’ in New Zealand they must regard the places and its phenomena not as alien but as normal. The earlier colonial attitude, on the other hand, had been to normalize New Zealand by destroying what was ‘alien’ (i.e., indigenous) and substituting in the space left by this destruction the social and material forms of the metropolitan world.⁵⁴

The need to belong led to recurrent themes in New Zealand non-fiction:

Celebration of the indigenous – birds, bush, the Maori; evocation of the ‘colourful’ early history of New Zealand; praise for the pioneers – all these major themes of New Zealand non-fiction writing from the 1890s to the 1930s were designed in various ways to make New Zealand writers (and readers) feel ‘at home’ in New Zealand. Nevertheless, writers continued to identify themselves as British and occasionally wrote of the Empire with a proud warmth that dismayed a later generation.⁵⁵

Despite the developments in historical research and changes in attitude since that time, these themes have persisted, and feature in much of the historical fiction for children considered in this thesis.

Reeves’ *The Long White Cloud*, first published in 1898, was the most influential history of New Zealand for many decades, and when it was republished in 1950 it was still the most widely read short history of the country. It was eventually surpassed in popularity by Keith Sinclair’s *A History of New Zealand* (1959) which

became an immediate success, and remained almost constantly in print for thirty years. It was authoritative, accurate and comprehensive, drawing on the whole body of extant historical scholarship, and its influence was considerable and long-lasting:

Quite apart from its impact on academics and students of history, Sinclair's *History* was widely read by writers and artists, and indeed by what may be called the general public, and has been a major influence on New Zealanders' perceptions of their pasts. In short, the *History* was not just a text but a cultural event as well.⁵⁶

These two books by Reeves and Sinclair were, more than any other histories, instrumental in shaping New Zealanders' ideas about their country's past; and it is probable that they influenced many of the authors of historical fiction set in New Zealand. Other texts likely to have been used as basic reference works include those by Alan Mulgan and A. W. Shrimpton (1922, 1930), and J. B. Condliffe (1925). More recent histories have a wider scope than in the past, as Gibbons points out:

Partly reflecting developments in historical scholarship elsewhere and partly in response to political changes within New Zealand itself, New Zealand historians during the 1970s and 1980s added enquiry into social, cultural and intellectual aspects of the past to their more traditional concerns with political and economic affairs. As a result, issues of gender, class and the nature of the colonial encounter have become much more prominent.⁵⁷

Subsequent survey histories published during the 1980s and 1990s, such as the first and second editions of the *Oxford History of New Zealand* (1981 and 1992) and James Belich's *Making Peoples: A History of the New Zealanders: From Polynesian Settlement to the End of the Nineteenth Century* (1996), reflect changing perceptions of the colonial experience, Maori history and the roles of women and families. This is also true of historical fiction for children; in fact, in some cases, as subsequent chapters make clear, fictional accounts prefigure the academic histories.

The texts discussed above are the most important survey histories of New Zealand, and are likely to have been consulted by many of the authors considered in this thesis. These books were not, of course, the only source of information available, as there have also been many regional and specialized histories published; and writers use other resources such as newspapers, journals, diaries, magazines, oral history, and

government publications. A survey I conducted among writers of historical fiction for children shows the wide range of material used by current authors in researching their novels. There is a summary of the survey findings in Appendix Three.

Current survey history texts which I have consulted extensively for this thesis are the *Penguin History of New Zealand* by Michael King, the second edition of the *Oxford History of New Zealand* edited by Geoffrey Rice, the *Oxford Illustrated History of New Zealand* edited by Keith Sinclair, and *Making Peoples* by James Belich. Other texts on specific topics have been used where necessary (for example Belich's *The New Zealand Wars and the Victorian Interpretation of Racial Conflict* and Stevan Eldred-Grigg's history of the New Zealand gold rushes); other sources are noted in the relevant chapters and listed in the Bibliography.⁵⁸

This thesis examines the way New Zealand history has been presented to young readers in the form of historical fiction. I discuss only written texts in English; oral traditions and books in Maori or other languages are outside the scope of this survey. For the purposes of this thesis I use those works which fall within the definition of 'New Zealand children's fiction' given by Diane Hebley in her Introduction to *The Power of Place*:

First, 'fiction' encompasses novels, novellas and stories commonly called 'chapter books' by teachers and children in New Zealand schools. Excluded are short stories, picture books, myths and legends, and texts written for didactic or pedagogical purposes.

Second, 'children's' fiction includes fiction for adolescents.⁵⁹

As Hebley points out, there is unending debate on what constitutes literature for children and young adults. She notes that, while over time a traditional canon of English children's literature has emerged, New Zealand's literature is still too new for the same to have happened here. She therefore accepts John Rowe Townsend's definition of a children's book as one whose name appears on a publisher's list of children's books, and I likewise use this definition for recent fiction. I use the bibliographies in Gilderdale's *A Sea Change* and Bruce Ringer's *Young Emigrants: New Zealand Juvenile Fiction 1833-1919* as a guideline for earlier books. I therefore include William Satchell's *The Greenstone Door* (1914) and Frank O. V. Acheson's

Plume of the Arawa (1930), which are often regarded as books for adults, as Gilderdale classes them as children's fiction. I differ from Ringer and Gilderdale in omitting *Daddy Crips' Waifs: A Tale of Australasian Life and Adventure* (1886) by Alexander A. Fraser, which neither Ringer nor Gilderdale had sighted but which they include in their bibliographies on the strength of a description of it in an Australian text as 'a juvenile tale'.⁶⁰ While it could be read by older children, I do not consider it to be a children's book, as the characters are all adults, and the plot hinges on the evils of drink. Both *Daddy Crips' Waifs* and Fraser's subsequent novel, *Raromi or the Maori Chief's Heir* (1888), which features some of the same characters, are included by Lawrence Jones in the chapter on 'The Novel' in the *Oxford History of New Zealand Literature* and described as 'melodramatic romances'.⁶¹ I have been unable to locate copies of W. H. G. Kingston's *The Fortunes of the 'Ranger' and 'Crusader'. A Tale of Two Ships and the Adventures of Their Passengers and Crews* (1872) and *The Three Admirals and the Adventures of Their Young Followers* (1878), which are both listed by Ringer, so I have not been able to ascertain whether they are historical novels. A case could be made for the inclusion of Maori myths and legends, as many include fictionalized versions of historical events, but this thesis is concerned only with historical novels in the conventional form.

An 'historical novel' is defined in the *Concise Oxford Dictionary of Literary Terms* as 'a novel in which the action takes place during a specific historical period well before the time of writing (often one or two generations before, sometimes several centuries), and in which some attempt is made to depict accurately the customs and mentality of the period'.⁶² This definition provides several useful criteria for selecting the books to be included in this survey; namely the setting in a specific historical period, and the attempt to present an accurate picture of that period. However, limiting the scope of historical fiction to 'a period well before the time of writing' or, as in the definition given in the *Concise Oxford Companion to English Literature*, 'a period before the birth of the author',⁶³ is not always relevant in this case.⁶⁴ A number of the Victorian settler novels discussed in this thesis were written shortly after the period in which they were set, but they are 'historical' in that they are set in specific time periods and deal with actual historical events, such as nineteenth century immigration to New Zealand, and the New Zealand Wars. The *Oxford*

Dictionary definition of historical as ‘having to do with history’ or ‘belonging to or set in the past’,⁶⁵ does not stipulate a qualifying time period, and is therefore pertinent in this context. As Lawrence Jones observes in his discussion of New Zealand novels in the *Oxford History of New Zealand Literature*, novels which deal with even very recent periods can be classed as historical novels if they treat their setting as ‘something finished, a different age’, whose events are ‘viewed from a distance, vividly re-created, but placed as ‘period’ experiences’.⁶⁶ The Victorian novels also fall into one of Ern Finniss’s three categories of realistic historical fiction, that is, ‘time capsule texts’, written some time ago, in which ‘Issues, fashions, lifestyles, attitudes, events and relationships, the elements of contemporary concern at the time of writing, are preserved in print for the appreciation of following generations.’⁶⁷

This thesis will focus on literary rather than educational concerns; that is, it will consider books available to the general reading public and read by children as a leisure activity. It excludes publications whose primary purpose is instruction rather than entertainment, and those accessed only in schools and used for teaching purposes. Stories with historical themes published in the *School Journal* or other school readers therefore fall outside the scope of this survey, unless they were subsequently republished in book form (as, for example, *The Springing Fern* by Roderick Finlayson, which first appeared as a series of Primary School Bulletins). I also include ‘time-slip’ novels and those which have dual narratives set in the past and the present, where the historical component of these books makes a serious attempt to depict the customs and mentality of the past. The focus will be on New Zealand historical fiction, that is, books in English set during specific periods of New Zealand history. The majority are by New Zealand authors, although the Victorian novels considered in Chapter Four were written by English writers who did not live here, and had, indeed, never visited New Zealand. These novels qualify as ‘New Zealand’ fiction by virtue of their inclusion in Ringer’s and Gilderdale’s bibliographies. Gilderdale also lists books by English writers Ronald Syme and S. C. George as New Zealand junior fiction, and I have therefore included them in this thesis. Novels set wholly or partly outside this country are included if they deal with topics considered part of our national history, such as emigrants’ experiences before

and during their voyages to New Zealand. The texts range from those published in the mid nineteenth century to those published in 2008. Although I have tried to provide a comprehensive survey, there may be some books which I have missed, and new historical fiction continues to be published.

The development of the historical fiction genre in New Zealand was a gradual process, with only two historical novels for children being published in each of the seven decades from the 1860s to 1920. During the next forty years, numbers of historical novels published increased only slowly: three during the 1920s, six during the 1930s, none at all during the 1940s, and five in the 1950s. During the 1960s, however, the number of historical novels published suddenly rose to seventeen; this was maintained during the 1970s and rose during the 1980s to twenty-eight. This coincided with an overall growth in the number of children's books published in New Zealand; as Gilderdale has pointed out: 'If the 1950s and 1960s were decades of uneven but steady growth, the years after 1970 saw a spectacular transformation in both the quantity and quality of New Zealand children's literature'.⁶⁸ Historical fiction, in fact, made up only a relatively small percentage of these books: 30 percent in the 1970s, and 26 percent in the 1980s.⁶⁹ During the 1990s the number of historical novels published dropped back to seventeen, which Diane Hebley attributed in 2001 to 'conventional public wisdom [which] declares that children won't read historical novels any more. Young readers, so it is said, want to read about themselves and their problems.'⁷⁰ Hebley linked the decline in the publication of historical fiction with the virtual disappearance of history as a stand-alone subject in school curricula and its curtailment in university programmes. However, Hebley's rider, warning against making 'edicts about what children will or will not read',⁷¹ proved to be apt, as since 2001 over forty historical novels for children have been published, and there is at present no indication that the interest in historical fiction is waning. The Scholastic 'My Story' series has been a significant factor in the recent revival of historical fiction for children, with twenty-one books published between 2003 and 2008.

For the first six decades, New Zealand historical novels for children dealt exclusively with the nineteenth century settlement of New Zealand by British immigrants, and/or

the New Zealand Wars. During the 1920s several novels appeared set during the early contact period, and during the following decades a number of books were published set in the pre-European period. The first novel dealing with what I have termed the colonial period (that is, with characters already resident in New Zealand rather than immigrants) was published in 1934, and novels featuring the gold rushes made a rather belated appearance during the 1950s. The 1960s saw the publication of three books about twentieth-century events; by the 1980s there were almost equal numbers of books set during the twentieth century and those set in earlier times; and since the 1990s books about twentieth century history comprise approximately two-thirds of all junior historical novels published. The emphasis has moved from documenting the protagonists' arrival in New Zealand and the creation of a new country to stories in which 'New Zealandness' is taken for granted. The number of books published in each decade, and the periods in which they are set, are presented in the form of tables and graphs in Appendix Two.

The Victorian and early twentieth century novelists used New Zealand as the setting for moral tales or imperial adventure stories, in which historical aspects were often modified to support the authors' evangelistic or political agenda. The first historical novel by an author actually living in New Zealand was the 'crossover' text, *The Greenstone Door* published in 1914, and the first historical fictions by a New Zealand writer written specifically for children were Mona Tracy's *Rifle and Tomahawk* (1927), *Lawless Days* (1928), and *Martin Thorn – Adventurer* (1930). Although adventure stories with an historical setting continue to appear, novels increasingly attempt to provide credible information based on extensive research and reflecting current historiography. Occasionally the desire to impart historical information is at the expense of the narrative, recalling Kipling's description of his first attempt at a historical story: 'a painstaking and meritorious piece of work overloaded with verified references, with about as much feeling to it as a walking stick'.⁷² In some cases authors provide additional historical data, including glossaries, maps, photographs, and lists of further reading, though the impression of authenticity which this peritextual material confers on the fictional text can be contentious, as it tends to validate the version of the past presented in the novel.

Among the issues I address in relation to the texts are historical considerations, literary aspects, and ideological issues. This thesis examines what historical information is given in fiction for children; which actual historical events and/or people are used by authors in their books; how faithful they are to the historical record; and whether their interpretations of those events have since been superseded. It also examines differences between the ways events are chosen and presented in books written at different times. For example, while almost all books about the colonial period are written from the perspective of the settlers, earlier texts present the activities of the settlers in a positive way, as ‘civilising’ and progressive; while more recent novels are more likely to question the impact of the colonizers on the existing society and the land, and may also focus on less positive examples of colonization or consider the experiences of non-English or European immigrants.

Another question considered is the difficulty of recreating historical periods retrospectively, and the extent to which the author’s contemporary values and ideas colour his or her interpretation of the past. According to Anne Scott MacLeod, American children’s literature has been politicized since the 1960s, and feminist re-readings and the experience of minorities are changing the way history is being written. The tendency for authors to ‘snip away the less attractive pieces of the past to make their narratives meet current social and political preferences’ leads to ‘historically doubtful stories’.⁷³

Bending historical narrative to modern models of social behaviour, however, makes for bad history, and the more specific the model, the harder it is to avoid distorting historical reality. The current pressure to change old stereotypes into “positive images” for young readers is not only insistent, but highly specific about what is the desirable image, and often highly untenable.⁷⁴

This thesis considers whether the same applies to New Zealand historical fiction for children; and whether writers deliberately give their protagonists anachronistic attitudes to make them more attractive to modern readers, or eliminate factors which are historically correct but are now considered to be unappealing or offensive (such as racism or sexism).

In choosing subjects for historical novels, authors often face a conflict between the imperatives of the children's literature genre and those of the historical fiction genre; for example, how to reconcile the often terrible and tragic facts of history with the perceived need of children's books to be optimistic and have happy endings, and how to accommodate complex historical issues within the simple plots and clear-cut moral schematism generally associated with fiction for children. As Canadian writer Dieter Petzold points out, presenting history in children's books has both ideological and pedagogical considerations. 'The question, then, is not only "which truth?" but also "how much truth?" History is always complex and rarely encouraging: how much complexity and discouragement can you burden a child reader with?'⁷⁵ Consequently, moral issues are often simplified, and historical novels tend to avoid 'the disturbing paradox that in war and other political or ideological conflicts terrible acts are committed by ordinary people who are rarely wholly bad; what is considered criminal in ordinary life becomes morally ambiguous, if not praiseworthy, when done for "higher motives"'.⁷⁶ Petzold argues that historical novels for children tend to have a melioristic view of history, that is, a belief in progress. This thesis considers the subject matter of New Zealand historical fiction for children, and whether it does, in fact, present a simplified and melioristic approach to history.

Among the literary aspects of the texts considered in this thesis are the settings, both temporal and physical, and narrative techniques such as focalization. John Stephens maintains that the settings of historical novels have ideological implications:

Actual settings implicate attitude and ideology, because writers of fiction are rarely content to use the spatio-temporal dimension of setting merely as an authenticating element of narrative. Since practically and traditionally the function of setting in fiction is to convey atmosphere, attitudes and values, it is inevitable that writers of historical fiction, obliged as they are to pay careful attention to setting, would also use it as part of the process of signification.⁷⁷

Stephens notes that this is particularly relevant to novels set during the colonial period (such as those discussed in this thesis):

A frontier setting intensifies the capacity of a period setting to offer a situation in which behaviour normal for a modern reader no longer pertains, where human beings step outside their quotidian masks and take on new roles. [...] Setting is thus more than mere background, but an element that contributes to making a

character act in a particular way. A frontier landscape overtly expresses both an extension of the subjectivity of those who choose to inhabit it, and a primary object which must be opposed or come to terms with⁷⁸.

Stephens' contention is borne out in the many New Zealand historical novels which trace the maturation of their young protagonists through their interaction with the unfamiliar and sometimes hostile frontier environment.

The distinctive character of the New Zealand landscape is another significant factor in historical fiction for children. Diane Hebley points out in *The Power of Place* that the salient features of New Zealand's geography are its isolation from other countries; the dominance of seascapes in these narrow islands where no-one lives more than 130 kilometres from the sea; and the inherent danger of the landscape, with its high mountains, active volcanoes, dense bush and treacherous rivers. The New Zealand landscape is, therefore:

particularly suited to stories of adventure and challenge in children's fiction, for danger includes whatever threatens the physical, mental or psychological well-being of the characters. It is not surprising that writers who choose to draw on these images of danger find them a source of power to enhance their fiction.

From these two consequences of origins – the dominance of seascapes and the inherent power and unpredictable danger of landscapes – come distinguishing characteristics in children's fiction.⁷⁹

Hebley is referring to children's fiction in general, but her statement is particularly relevant to historical fiction, as the physical environment is even more crucial in stories set in the past when the landscape was wilder, more isolated, and more perilous than the present. Natural disasters such as earthquakes, eruptions, and floods feature frequently, and death (or near death) by drowning is a recurrent motif. Many historical novels also deal with the long and often dangerous sea voyage to New Zealand, which signifies a physical and psychological disjunction between the characters' old lives and the new lives they must create for themselves in an unfamiliar and often inhospitable landscape. New Zealand's isolation, and the impossibility for most of the protagonists of ever returning to their country of origin, provides a major incentive for them to succeed in their pioneering ventures.

Another literary aspect of these texts of particular relevance is focalization, that is, whose vision is presented for the readers to identify with, as this influences both the way historical events are presented and the way they are perceived. As most children's books are focalized through a child character, significant aspects of the past, such as political and economic concerns, are generally disregarded as being of little interest or having a negligible impact on children's daily lives, and the focus is on domestic life and 'adventures' of varying types. This thesis examines whether these child focalizers are male or female, Pakeha or Maori, English or European, working class or middle class, and discusses the effect this is likely to have on the readers. As we shall see, there is a clear preponderance of focalizers who are Pakeha (generally English) males, which has the effect of marginalising female, Maori and non-English characters. While there has been a noticeable increase in the number of female focalizers in more recent texts, the number of Maori focalizers has not risen to the same extent. Perry Nodelman and Mavis Reimer observe that in Canadian historical novels:

A surprising number use an unusual structure of double narration and focalization, regularly alternating the character through whose eyes readers are asked to see the events of the story. [...] These narratives can have the effect of moving readers to understand that truth is a complicated notion, built from various points of view. Such a technique might reflect or encourage widely shared public values in a country that is officially bilingual and that, since the 1970s, has had a national policy of promoting multiculturalism.⁸⁰

Given that New Zealand became officially bilingual in 1987 and that there has been increasing awareness of Maori issues, it is not surprising that some of our more recent historical fiction shows the use of similar narrative techniques, and the effect of these will be explored.

One aspect of children's books which distinguishes them from adult fiction is that many have illustrations. These can contribute to the reader's understanding of the story and create particular impressions of characters and places, as well as fulfilling an ideological purpose. For example, illustrations of Maori in Victorian novels often picture them as savage or grotesque, therefore, by implication, justifying their dispossession by Pakeha; while photographs of real people included in fictional texts (such as the Scholastic 'My Story' series) can suggest that the accompanying text is

also ‘real’ or historically accurate. Where I feel that illustrations are of particular interest, I have included them in the discussion of the texts.

Historical fiction not only conveys information about the past but is also instrumental in promulgating particular ideologies. This is particularly true of books written for children, as John M. MacKenzie points out in *Imperialism and Juvenile Literature*:

It is now recognised that juvenile literature acts as an excellent reflector of the dominant ideas of an age. The values and fantasies of adult authors are dressed up in fictional garb for youthful consumption, and the works thereby become instrumental in the dissemination and perpetuation of particular clusters of ideals, assumptions and ambitions.⁸¹

While all fiction for children disseminates ‘clusters of ideals, assumptions and ambitions’, John Stephens maintains that historical fiction is particularly susceptible to ideological functions:

It has always performed a moral, and even didactic, function, especially through its capacity to transform events which appear to be historical particularities into universals of human experience. Such transformations are an inevitable consequence of representing ‘history’ as narrative, since no narrative is free from point of view and teleological purpose. The ideologies implicit in historical fictions are an important dimension, since the socio-cultural values of a writer’s period will determine which ‘universals’ are inscribed within the fiction’s teleology.⁸²

It is important to identify the ideologies inscribed in these texts, since, as Mary Rubio suggests in the *Encyclopedia of Post-Colonial Literatures in English*, these ‘constructed values’ are internalised by readers and can continue to influence them into adulthood:

Because children’s literature naturalises constructed values (such as attitudes towards gender and marginalized peoples, standards of truth, decency, order and authenticity), it encodes the hierarchical power structures of society, which are then internalised by child readers. A child’s reading is part of what constructs the child who becomes the adult.⁸³

Many authors use novels set in the past to examine a range of social and cultural issues, such as racism, class structures and gender roles. The underlying assumption seems to be that readers will make comparisons with their own time and see either that things have changed for the better, or that the issues remain unresolved and still

need to be addressed. Sometimes these comparisons are made overt by the use of the time-slip device whereby modern protagonists directly confront the problems of the past, or by dual narratives, where modern and historical stories are juxtaposed.

Central to this thesis will be the identification of the social and cultural issues that are addressed in various books. Jean Webb has noted that ‘texts are simultaneously the producers and the product of their culture and time’;⁸⁴ and, accordingly, I have considered the texts in their historical context. By grouping books according to the historical period in which they are set, and considering them within each period in the order of publication, it is possible to identify the social attitudes that prevail at the time the books are written and to trace any changes in this regard. This is particularly relevant in juvenile literature, which, as Kimberley Reynolds observes, bring into focus the image each society creates of its children:

Because it has interfaces with so many areas, children’s literature can be a valuable resource for revealing ideological assumptions across a wide spectrum, including areas such as pedagogy, racism, sexism, classism, religion, environmental issues, nationalism and more. Overall, it is important to remember that children’s literature is a uniquely focused lens through which children and young people are asked to look at the images of themselves made for them by their societies.⁸⁵

With this in mind, this thesis analyses New Zealand historical novels for children to determine which ideological assumptions are revealed in these books. It addresses the questions of whether the same issues preoccupy authors writing in different historical eras and cultural contexts, and whether the values espoused are those of the period in which the story is set or those of the time of writing.

Underpinning any consideration of the ideology of New Zealand historical fiction for children is the fact that all of the historical novels have been written by Pakeha authors. Nodelman and Reimer have observed that, ‘Most mainstream children’s literature in North America has been written by whites of European descent and assumes that being white and of European descent is a norm from which other kinds of people diverge.’⁸⁶ The same applies to mainstream children’s literature in New Zealand; in fact this could be narrowed down from ‘European descent’ to ‘British’ or

even 'English' descent. As a result, Maori and other people of non-British descent have often been excluded or marginalised by children's fiction. (This situation applied to all New Zealand child readers until relatively recently, as the books available to New Zealand children were written for and about middle-class English children. In my childhood reading, the 'norm from which others diverged' was an English public school boy, destined for Oxbridge; a paradigm which effectively excluded New Zealand readers, especially girls.) The absence of historical fiction for children by Maori writers may be attributable to Maori attitudes to the past, and to cultural conventions about access to traditional knowledge. Maori history has been passed down through the oral tradition, which is often regarded as *tapu*, or restricted to tribal members or chosen individuals.⁸⁷ When stories of the past are published they are often in the form of myths and legends, which contain elements of both history and fiction, but presented in a way which does not conform to European literary categories.

Since the historical novels are all by non-Maori authors, the large majority of them are predictably concerned with the European rather than the Maori experience. As one of the underlying concerns of these novels is to constitute New Zealand as 'a place of habitation', they share the problem encountered in other colonial nations of establishing the European colonists as 'natives' of countries which already have indigenous inhabitants. Terry Goldie's study of Canadian, Australian and New Zealand literature suggests the only way 'whites' can belong in these countries is by a process of 'indigenization' or 'going native', which 'suggests the impossible necessity of becoming indigenous'.⁸⁸ Goldie identifies a number of methods of indigenization, such as penetration; appropriation; associating the original inhabitants with either sex and violence, or orality, mysticism and the prehistoric; and the assumption by the settler of the characteristics of the indigene. A number of these strategies have been employed in New Zealand historical fiction, and they will be identified and discussed in subsequent chapters.

Linda Hardy distinguishes between 'colonists', who seek to claim and Europeanize the land, and 'settlers', who relinquish their European culture and thereby achieve 'natural occupancy' of their new land. 'The pleasure afforded by these fictions is that

they allow the heirs of a settler society to imagine our unhistoric origin as the possibility of the making of a settlement without a colony.’⁸⁹ Many of the texts considered in this thesis, written for the young heirs of our settler society, advance these fictions by focusing on ‘settlement’ and evading the implications of colonization, and implying that their young settler protagonists are the ‘natural occupants’ of this country.

Stephen Turner also suggests that fiction is used to bridge the gap between ‘being colonial’ and ‘colonial being’: between wanting to make New Zealand like the old country, and wanting to be at home here – ‘Actually of the place. To be indigenous: to have come from here all along.’⁹⁰

Stories about being colonial/colonial being are always something of a cover-up. Such stories mask, or bridge, an historical discontinuity (that there is a before and after your arrival). Whether these narratives are historical and/or fictional and/or personal, they provide an illusory continuity, a more or less seamless sense of place or history. The basic idea is to get the settler ashore. Get him (and her) set up. Get them a house and land. With any luck a whole country. The self-evident desire is to make the peoples, place and history all of a piece, alternatively to make yourself all of a piece with the place. This is the myth-making moment, the story-telling moment, where fiction substitutes for historical fact.⁹¹

In the following chapters, I consider the ways New Zealand historical fiction for children and young people has attempted to ‘make the peoples, place and history all of a piece’, and to present its young protagonists (and by extension, its young readers) as being ‘all of a piece with the place’. I hope to demonstrate, in Peter Gibbons’ words, that ‘writing does not merely represent, as if transparently, an apparently fixed and given “real world”, but is itself an act of making, continually inventing – and re-inventing – the provisional notions of “New Zealand”; of its past and present, its “place” in the world.’⁹²

¹ Binney, ‘Maori Oral Narrative’, p.3.

² Georg Lukács, *The Historical Novel*, trans. by Hannah and Stanley Mitchell (London: Merlin Press, 1962), p.63.

³ Lukács, p.33.

⁴ Lukács, p.53.

⁵ Lukács, p.54.

⁶ Elizabeth Wesseling, *Writing History as a Prophet; Postmodernist Innovations in the Historical Novel* (Amsterdam: John Benjamin, 1991), p.33.

⁷ John Stephens, *Language and Ideology in Children’s Fiction* (London: Longmans, 1992), p.209.

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- ⁸ Victor Watson, ed., *The Cambridge Guide to Children's Books in English* (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 2001), p.335.
- ⁹ Peter Hunt, *An Introduction to Children's Literature* (Oxford: Oxford University Press, 1994), p.3.
- ¹⁰ Wesseling, p.74.
- ¹¹ Aiken, p.72.
- ¹² Lawrence Jones, 'The Novel', in *The Oxford History of New Zealand Literature in English*, ed. by Terry Sturm, 2nd edn, (Auckland: Oxford University Press, 1998), pp.119-244 (p.141).
- ¹³ Jones, 'The Novel', p.214.
- ¹⁴ Jones, 'The Novel', pp.178-179.
- ¹⁵ Jones, 'The Novel', p.179.
- ¹⁶ Lawrence Jones, 'Introduction', *Journal of New Zealand Literature* 9 (1991) 3-9, p.9.
- ¹⁷ Ralph J. Crane, 'Tickling History: Maurice Shadbolt and the New Zealand Wars', *Journal of New Zealand Literature* 9 (1991) 59-70, p.59.
- ¹⁸ Crane, p.69.
- ¹⁹ Crane, p.69.
- ²⁰ Margaret Drabble and Jenny Stringer, eds., *The Concise Oxford Companion to English Literature*, revised edition (Oxford: Oxford University Press, 1996), p.275.
- ²¹ Watson, p.335.
- ²² Mary Rubio, 'Children's Literature (Overview)', in *Encyclopedia of Post-Colonial Literatures in English*, 2nd edn, ed. by Eugene Benson and L. W. Conolly (London: Routledge, 2005), pp.226-228 (p.226).
- ²³ Clare Bradford, *Unsettling Narratives: Post-colonial Reading in Children's Literature* (Waterloo: Wilfred Laurier University Press, 2007), p.3.
- ²⁴ Michael Stone, 'Colonial and Postcolonial Children's Literature: Australia', in *Children's Literature: An Illustrated History* ed. by Peter Hunt (Oxford: Oxford University Press, 1995), pp.322-333 (p.322).
- ²⁵ Betty Gilderdale, 'Colonial and Postcolonial Children's Literature: New Zealand', in *Children's Literature: An Illustrated History*, pp.343-351 (p.343).
- ²⁶ Rod McGillis, 'Colonial and Postcolonial Children's Literature: Canada' in *Children's Literature: An Illustrated History*, pp. 333-343 (p.335).
- ²⁷ Stone, p.323.
- ²⁸ Maureen Nimon, 'Australian Children's Literature to 1890' in *Australian Children's Literature: An Exploration of Genre and Theme*, by John Elwall Foster, Ern J. Finnis and Maureen Nimon (Wagga Wagga: L.I.S. Press, 1995), pp.1-13 (p.7).
- ²⁹ Clare Bradford, 'Saved by the Word: Textuality and Colonization in Nineteenth-Century Australian Texts for Children' in *Voices of the Other: Children's Literature and the Postcolonial Context* ed. by Rod McGillis (New York: Garland, 2000), pp. 89-109 (p.91).
- ³⁰ Ern J. Finnis, 'Australia's Social History; Understanding our Past' in *Australian Children's Literature: An Exploration of Genre and Theme*, pp.105-120 (p.106).
- ³¹ Finnis, p.109.
- ³² Finnis, p.114-115.
- ³³ Watson, p.335.
- ³⁴ Wesseling, p.70.
- ³⁵ R. G. Collingwood, *The Idea of History* (Oxford: Oxford University Press, 1946), p.247.
- ³⁶ Anna Green and Kathleen Troup, *The Houses of History* (Manchester: Manchester University Press, 1999), p.7.
- ³⁷ Green and Troup, p.7.
- ³⁸ Green and Troup, p.59.
- ³⁹ Green and Troup, p.174.
- ⁴⁰ Green and Troup, p.177.
- ⁴¹ Green and Troup, p.206.
- ⁴² Allan Megill, "'Grand Narrative" and the Discipline of History', in *A New Philosophy of History* ed. by Frank Ankersmit and Hans Kellner (Chicago: The University of Chicago Press, 1995) pp. 151-173 (pp.152-153).
- ⁴³ Rowland Weston, 'Introducing Theoretical Issues through Popular Historical Film' (Unpublished essay, 2008).
- ⁴⁴ Green and Troup, p.253.

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- ⁴⁵ Green and Troup, p.255.
- ⁴⁶ Green and Troup, p.255.
- ⁴⁷ Jeremy Black and Donald. M. MacRaild, *Studying History*, 2nd edn (London: MacMillan, 2000), p.148.
- ⁴⁸ Bradford, *Unsettling Narratives*, p.10.
- ⁴⁹ Bradford, *Unsettling Narratives*, p.12.
- ⁵⁰ Bradford, *Unsettling Narratives*, p.10.
- ⁵¹ Peter Gibbons, 'Non-Fiction', p.32.
- ⁵² Gibbons, 'Non-Fiction', p.79.
- ⁵³ Gibbons, 'Non-Fiction', p.55.
- ⁵⁴ Gibbons, 'Non-Fiction', p.55.
- ⁵⁵ Gibbons, 'Non-Fiction', p.68.
- ⁵⁶ Gibbons, 'Non-Fiction', p.72.
- ⁵⁷ Peter Gibbons, 'New Zealand', in *Encyclopedia of Historians and Historical Writing*, ed. by Kelly Boyd (London: Fitzroy Dearborn, 1999), pp.870-871 (p.870).
- ⁵⁸ This thesis was completed before the publication of the *New Oxford History of New Zealand* edited by Giselle Byrnes (2009).
- ⁵⁹ Diane Hebley, *The Power of Place: Landscape in New Zealand Children's Fiction, 1970-1989* (Dunedin: University of Otago Press, 1998), p.10.
- ⁶⁰ Ringer, p.44.
- ⁶¹ Jones, 'The Novel', p.124.
- ⁶² Chris Baldick, *The Concise Oxford Dictionary of Literary Terms* (Oxford: Oxford University Press, 1990), p.99.
- ⁶³ Drabble and Stringer, p.274.
- ⁶⁴ A number of twentieth century New Zealand historical novels are set within the lifetime of the author, and often, in fact, draw on the author's own experiences. Notable examples are Tessa Duder's *Alex* quartet, Jack Lazenby's *Dead Man's Head* and its sequels, and Maurice Gee's *Orchard Street* and *The Champion*. Although these events may seem to adults to be contemporary rather than historical, they all occurred well before the birth of the children who are the intended readers of these books.
- ⁶⁵ *The Compact Oxford Dictionary, Thesaurus, and Wordpower Guide* (Oxford: Oxford University Press, 2001), p.424.
- ⁶⁶ Jones, p.219.
- ⁶⁷ Finnis, p.106.
- ⁶⁸ Gilderdale, 'Children's Literature', p.546.
- ⁶⁹ Hebley, *The Power of Place*, p.24.
- ⁷⁰ Diane Hebley, 'Multiple Landscapes, Multiple Voices: Valuing place in New Zealand children's fiction', in *Cinderella Transformed: Multiple Voices and Diverse Dialogues in Children's Literature*, ed. by John McKenzie, Doreen Darnell and Anna Smith, (Christchurch: Centre for Children's Literature, 2003), pp.121-133 (p.127).
- ⁷¹ Hebley, 'Multiple Landscapes, Multiple Voices', p.128.
- ⁷² Rudyard Kipling, *Something of Myself* (London: MacMillan, 1964), p.188.
- ⁷³ Anne Scott MacLeod, 'Writing Backward: Modern Models in Historical Fiction', *The Horn Book Magazine*, 74,1 (1998), pp.26-33 (p.27).
- ⁷⁴ MacLeod, p.32.
- ⁷⁵ Dieter Petzold, 'Multiculturalism in Canadian Children's Books: The Embarrassments of History', in *Voices of the Other: Children's Literature and the Postcolonial Context* (New York: Garland, 2000), pp.177-192 (p.179).
- ⁷⁶ Petzold, p.186.
- ⁷⁷ Stephens, p.209.
- ⁷⁸ Stephens, p.209.
- ⁷⁹ Hebley, *The Power of Place*, p.15.
- ⁸⁰ Perry Nodelman and Mavis Reimer, *The Pleasures of Children's Literature*, 3rd edn (Boston, Allyn and Bacon, 2003), p.155.
- ⁸¹ John M. MacKenzie, 'General Editor's Foreword', in *Imperialism and Juvenile Literature*, ed. by Jeffrey Richards (Manchester: Manchester University Press, 1989), p.vii.
- ⁸² Stephens, p.238.
- ⁸³ Rubio, p.228.

⁸⁴ Jean Webb, 'Text, Culture, and Post-Colonial Children's Literature: A Comparative Perspective', in *Voices of the Other: Children's Literature and the Postcolonial Context*, ed. by Roderick McGillis, (New York: Garland, 2000), pp.71-88 (p.71).

⁸⁵ Kimberley Reynolds, ed. *Modern Children's Literature: An Introduction* (Basingstoke: Palgrave MacMillan, 2005), p.3.

⁸⁶ Nodelman and Reimer, p.170.

⁸⁷ Jane McRae, 'Maori Literature: A Survey', in the *Oxford History of New Zealand Literature*, pp.1-30 (p.7).

⁸⁸ Terry Goldie, *Fear and Temptation: The Image of the Indigene in Canadian, Australian and New Zealand Literatures* (Kingston: McGill-Queens University Press, 1989), p.13.

⁸⁹ Linda Hardy, 'Natural Occupancy', in *Asian and Pacific Inscriptions: Identities, Ethnicities, Nationalities*, ed. by Suvendrini Perera (Bundoora, Victoria: La Trobe University Press 1995), pp.213-227 (p.214).

⁹⁰ Stephen Turner, 'Being Colonial/Colonial Being', *Journal of New Zealand Literature*, 20 (2002), 39-66 (p.39).

⁹¹ Turner, p.58-59.

⁹² Gibbons, 'Non-Fiction', p.33.

CHAPTER TWO
MORIORI AND MOA-HUNTERS:
HISTORICAL FICTION SET DURING THE PRE-EUROPEAN PERIOD

“All this will be our land as long as our fire is kept burning on it.”¹

Until the 1970s it was generally believed that New Zealand was discovered in 950 AD by the Polynesian navigator Kupe (who named the country Aotearoa) and that during the following two hundred years the country was populated by dark-skinned Moriori of Melanesian origin, who arrived in New Zealand by chance, their canoes driven here by storms. Planned settlement was thought to have dated from 1150, when Polynesian voyagers began to arrive in New Zealand, culminating in the ‘Great Fleet’ of seven canoes in 1350 AD. The Moriori were unable to withstand the racially superior newcomers and were wiped out, except for a small number who escaped to the Chatham Islands. These theories, formulated largely by amateur ethnologists Stephenson Percy Smith and Elsdon Best during the late nineteenth century and popularized in William Pember Reeves’s influential history of New Zealand, *The Long White Cloud* (1898), were taught in schools, and formed the basis of historical fiction about pre-European history until the late twentieth century. However, they have been disproved by more recent scholars (such as David Simmons), and this version of New Zealand’s original settlement is now generally referred to as ‘The Great New Zealand Myth’.²

Current research suggests that New Zealand was settled by immigrants from the islands of East Polynesia in the thirteenth century AD.³ For the first 100 to 150 years the settlers had a mobile lifestyle, moving from their home settlements for seasonal activities, such as hunting moa or seals, gathering seafood, or collecting stone for tools. In the fourteenth and fifteenth centuries, when moa and other large game had been hunted to the brink of extinction, Maori became more reliant on cultivating food, such as kumara, which necessitated staying in one place rather than moving around. As groups became settled in defined territories, they began to form larger associations based on relationships and areas of occupation, which led, in the fifteenth and sixteenth centuries, to the development of the tribal phase of Maori culture. The growth in population and increased competition for resources also gave

rise to the building of fortified pa, initially to protect food supplies from acquisitive neighbours, but increasingly, as the culture became more martial, as protection from marauders. By the sixteenth century ‘classic’ or tribal Maori society had been established all over New Zealand, with the exception of the sparsely populated lower half of the South Island. The country was divided into areas inhabited by the various tribes or iwi (which traced their descent from their ancestral canoes) but they shared a common language and culture. There was sporadic inter-tribal warfare for the control of land and resources, or to exact utu for real or perceived wrongs, and pa were built with elaborate defences to withstand invading war parties. A rather different type of Maori society evolved in the Chatham Islands, which were settled by a group of Maori from mainland New Zealand during the fourteenth or fifteenth century. Over time their culture diverged from that on the mainland, notably in their rejection of warfare to settle disputes. The Chatham Island Maori referred to themselves as Moriori, their dialectal version of the word Maori.⁴

No written records exist for this pre-European stage of New Zealand history and until the 1980s there were no reasonably accessible written historical accounts, which may be why few authors have chosen to set their historical novels during this period.⁵ Another possible reason is the fact that New Zealand historical novels are written by authors of European descent, who are more interested in (or more confident about) writing about non-indigenous characters, and who may fear accusations of ‘misappropriation’ if they attempt to write Maori history. Because the novels about the pre-European period cover such a long time period, they will be considered in three separate groups: the early canoe voyages and the arrival of the Polynesian settlers in New Zealand; the so-called moa hunter period; and the ‘classic’ period of Maori society, both on the mainland and on the Chatham Islands.

Laya (1985) by Bernard Gadd tells of a canoe voyage between several Pacific islands. It is set many years before the migration to New Zealand, but I include it here because the voyage described is typical of the long-range canoe journeys undertaken by the Polynesians (as described in *Vaka Moana: Voyages of the Ancestors: The Discovery and Settlement of the Pacific*⁶) and is a forerunner of the later migrations to this country. The story is told in the first person by the eponymous heroine, a

thirteen-year old girl who is abducted and taken aboard a canoe embarking on a long ocean voyage. Driven from home by a feud between rival chiefs, the voyagers face dangers both from the sea and from natives on the islands where they make landfall, until finally they find an uninhabited island to make their home. The narrative gives no indication of when or where the story is set, but an endnote on the words used in the book says that they come from the Proto-Central Pacific language, which was spoken before 1000 BC; and according to the information on the back cover of the book, the voyage takes place in the Western Pacific between Vanuatu, New Caledonia and Fiji three or four thousand years ago. Although it would be impossible to verify the details of the islanders' way of life and the canoe voyage at this distance in time, Gadd has clearly undertaken considerable research, and he tries to impart a sense of authenticity by the use of images which derive from the setting. For example, Laya describes the night sky in terms of a canoe: 'We drifted side by side in the huge dark of night's canoe. The vast [sic] sail of stars swung slowly to the tides of the darkness.'⁷ Relationships between the voyagers are depicted realistically and sympathetically, in particular those between Laya, Langi, the old priest to whom she is given as wife, and Fose, a young warrior. Traditional tales told by Langi add another dimension and help explain the spiritual beliefs which underlie the islanders' lives. Although the story is set several thousand years before the Maori came to New Zealand, the pattern of Pacific canoe voyages probably did not change greatly during this time, and the voyage to New Zealand described in *Rangatira* is very similar to that of *Laya*.

Rangatira (1959) by Norman B. Tindale and Harold A. Lindsay is the only novel which deals with the voyage from Polynesia to New Zealand and the early days of settlement. The authors were anthropologists and naturalists, so it is not surprising that their book attempts to provide a detailed and accurate picture of life in the Pacific Islands and New Zealand at the time of the Polynesian migrations of the fourteenth century. At times, in fact, the authors seem more intent on explaining the techniques of fishing, canoe making, or shaping greenstone weapons than in telling a story; as Betty Gilderdale comments, 'Occasionally the authors' erudition gets the better of them and the pace of the story is sacrificed to historical precision.'⁸ The educational purpose of the book is reinforced by twenty-three pages of notes, consisting of a

pronunciation guide, information on the historical background of Polynesian migration, an alphabetical section of notes (from 'Aotearoa' to 'Utu'), and a list of books for further reading. These notes are useful in providing readers with more information about the period, though historical research since *Rangatira* was published in 1959 has called some of the details into question. For example, both the narrative and the notes refer to the discovery of New Zealand by Kupe in 950, and state that when they arrived in New Zealand the Maori migrants found prior occupants, the 'Tangata Whenua',⁹ who are described as filthy, smelly, and lazy (though this does not deter the newcomers from capturing them to use as servants); the notes helpfully suggest that 'they appear to have been somewhat degenerate descendants of Polynesians whose canoes had been driven there by a great storm'.¹⁰ Both of these historical 'facts' have since been disproved.

The story itself relates the preparations for the migration to New Zealand, the long and difficult voyage, and the problems involved in settling in a new country. The hardships faced by Pacific Islanders in adjusting to an unfamiliar environment where the temperatures are much colder and their traditional foods do not grow are well described. The story is told mainly from the viewpoint of a girl, Kura, and boy, Maui, who eventually marry each other and have a family, and the book ends with the death of Kura (by then an old woman and matriarch of her tribe), the last survivor of the original migrants and the last link with their Pacific home. The alternating viewpoints enable the authors to describe the roles of both men and women in the society of the time. Because the book covers such a long time period, the plot is episodic and there are often gaps of many years between the events of succeeding chapters. The authors' attempt to fit as much information as possible into the story detracts from the main plotline; for example, several chapters describe a trip made by Perere, Kura and Maui's son, together with a group of travellers from Hawai'i, to Australia (where they encounter aborigines), Lord Howe Island, and Norfolk Island (where Perere meets a beautiful maiden whom he brings home as his wife).

The language is sometimes stilted when the need to impart information overcomes style; for example, when the canoe departs on its long voyage, Kura, who has been weeping bitterly at being parted from her family, stands up and looks back at the

island. “‘I’ve often wondered what it looked like from the sea”, she remarked. “As it’s tapu for a girl to enter a fishing canoe, this is my first view of it.””¹¹ Obviously the authors wish to inform readers about the tapu, but Kura’s abrupt transition from grief to calm curiosity, and the unlikelihood of her making such a remark to her fellow passengers who are already aware of the tapu, strain credulity. At times the authors break the illusion of being in the past by interrupting the narrative with anachronistic observations; Kupe is referred to as ‘the Polynesian Columbus’ and Kupe’s story is described as being passed from generation to generation and ‘preserved until the day, seven centuries later, when European men heard it and wrote it down’.¹² The illustrations by Douglas F. Maxted provide visual details of activities such as fishing, tree felling, canoe building and making fire.



Illustration by Douglas F. Maxted for *Rangatira* by Norman B. Tindale and Harold A. Lindsay, p.35 and p.70.

The early East Polynesian (moa hunter) period of New Zealand history has been the subject of four books – *The Story of Kawau and the Moriori* (1930) by Arthur W. Stuckey, *Moa Hunter* (1978) by Eve Sutton, and *Ihaka and the Summer Wandering* (1982) and *Ihaka and the Prophecy* (1984) by Joanna Orwin. Stuckey’s *The Story of Kawau and the Moriori* combines historical accounts with Maori legends, autobiographical pieces, and musings on sociology and philosophy. The first section, ‘The Story of Kawau’, is the only part of the book which is historical fiction, and it consists of four brief chapters in which the author relates how Nika Umanarangu, the last Moriori of Kawau Island, appears to him in a dream and tells him of his life on the island. According to Nika, Kawau was originally settled by small, dark-skinned people whom he calls Tangata-Whenuas. When the Moriori arrived on the island, the Tangata-Whenuas departed ‘down South’, taking with them their treasure of precious stones. The Moriori lived a peaceful existence on Kawau, venturing over to the mainland on occasion to hunt moa, which appear, from the text and accompanying

illustrations, to have been huge, aggressive and very cunning. The Moriori's idyllic life is shattered by the arrival of a Maori war party which massacres all the islanders. Nika manages to kill over a hundred Maori warriors single-handed before he himself is slain. Stuckey seems to have based his story in part on his own amateur archaeological investigations. He mentions finding skeletons and moa bones on Kawau Island, as well as shell middens with three distinct layers, which he takes to indicate three separate periods of occupation. It is impossible to determine whether he did any further research, but his descriptions of moa hunting appear fanciful (for example, a hunter rides on a moa's back before killing it with a blow to the head), as does his account of how Nika manages to overcome so many of the Maori unaided.



"Now Nngu," cried the small voice again, "now is your chance. For your life strike hard and true."

Illustration by unknown artist for *The Story of Kawau and the Moriori* by Arthur W. Stuckey, p.18.

The writing is careless, with numerous spelling mistakes, and there are inconsistencies in the text; for example, at one point Nika states that he cannot

understand the language of the Maori he has captured, but on the preceding and following pages he is able to converse with other Maori warriors.

Rather more plausible and considerably better written than *The Story of Kawau and the Moriori*, *Moa Hunter* by Eve Sutton was published in 1978, and is also based on the theory that moa hunters ‘lived in New Zealand before the coming of the Maoris, and were probably the original inhabitants of the land.’¹³ The story concerns the first contact between the peaceful semi-nomadic moa hunters and a tribe of warlike tattooed Maori who live in a fortified pa. The difference between the two peoples is demonstrated by the first encounter between Kotiri, the young moa hunter, and Tama, the son of the Maori chief. Kotiri expects to be welcomed as an honoured guest, but Tama threatens him with a mere:

“Tell me, Kotiri, do you come in peace?”

“In peace?” I was puzzled. “What other way is there to come?”¹⁴

Kotiri has been crippled in an ill-advised attempt to spear a giant moa, so is unable to succeed his father as Ariki, but he proves his worth by negotiating with the Maori for kumara to feed his people. However, he realises that his people will not be able to hold back the aggressive and well-armed newcomers and that their traditional way of life has gone for ever:

You cannot halt the tide; you can only hold it back for a little while. We have kept our land, and so has Nuku’s tribe over the water, but there has been fighting and bloodshed and killing, and I fear there always will be. The world is changing and we must change with it. Others will come in great canoes and their ways will not be our ways.

Remember always what the wise tohunga said to me, so very long ago:

The old fishing net is thrown away, and we must begin to fish with the new one. The new fishing net – what will it be like?¹⁵

The encounter Sutton depicts between the moa hunters and the Maori, and the conflict between their different ways of life, are unlikely to have occurred in the way she has described, given that it is now accepted that there was a gradual transition from the early nomadic life-style to the settled tribal period, and that ‘The idea that the early people were peaceful and succumbed to the superior military capacity of

later arrivals is improbable'.¹⁶ Nevertheless, Sutton provides a well-researched and imaginatively reconstructed view of moa hunter society.¹⁷

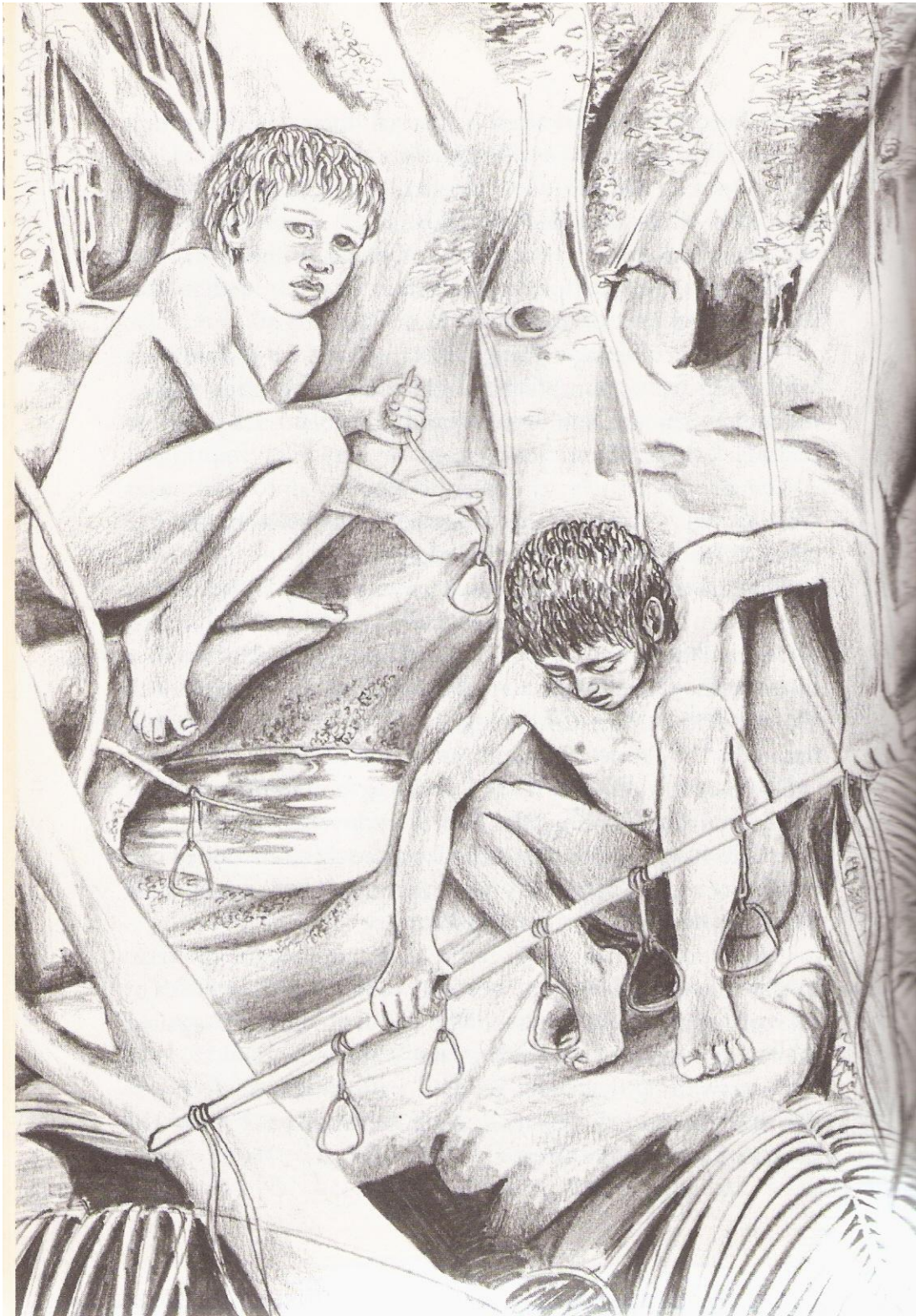


Illustration by Robyn Kahukiwa for *Ihaka and the Summer Wandering* by Joanna Orwin, p.44.

Joanna Orwin's two books *Ihaka and the Summer Wandering* and *Ihaka and the Prophecy*, published in 1982 and 1984 respectively, are set in the Nelson region about a hundred years after the arrival of the Maori in New Zealand. The lifestyle portrayed is similar to that in *Moa Hunter*, with the tribe living for part of the year in a permanent camp on the coast, and traveling during the summer months to gather food or stone for tools. Joanna Orwin has clearly researched the period thoroughly, and these books offer a great deal of information hung on a fairly slight fictional framework.¹⁸ The adventures of Ihaka and his friend Pahiko are the pretext for accounts of bird snaring, fishing, tool making, and other activities. However, Orwin wears her scholarship more lightly than Tindale and Lindsay, and the descriptive passages do not slow the narrative pace unduly. Robyn Kahukiwa's illustrations, both the full-page black and white drawings in the text and the coloured pictures on the book jackets, usefully augment the written descriptions, by showing the various activities and tools mentioned in the texts. Kahukiwa is one of the two Maori artists who have illustrated works of historical fiction (the other is Katarina Mataira), and they provide an exception to the otherwise exclusively Pakeha 'voice' of the texts. Both of the *Ihaka* books have a glossary of Maori words, and *Ihaka and the Summer Wandering* has a map showing the situation of the moa hunters' camps and the routes of their expeditions. The second book is devoted almost entirely to a description of the building of an ocean-going canoe, so that Ihaka and his whanau can travel across Cook Strait to renew their ties with tribes in the North Island. The book ends with the people preparing to leave, so the expedition the story has been leading up to is not included.

Surprisingly, only one novel, Frank O. V. Acheson's *Plume of the Arawas* (1930) is set during the classic tribal period of Maori society. While Sutton's and Orwin's books are definitely for young readers, *Plume of the Arawas* is aimed at an older audience; in fact it is included in the section on 'The Novel' in the *Oxford History of New Zealand Literature*, where it is described as an 'epic of the pre-European Maori' in 'the conventional mode of the Maori romance'.¹⁹ However Gilderdale includes it as a children's book in *A Sea Change*, and as the story of a young man's coming of age it would undoubtedly appeal to a juvenile audience. The storyline has all the hallmarks of a romance – a brave and handsome youth defeats all his enemies,

inherits the chieftom of his tribe, conquers new lands, and wins the love of a fair maiden, the daughter of a rival chieftain. There is a certain amount of sentimentality in the plot, especially in the love story of Manaia (also known as Tuwharétoa) and Rerémoa, possibly reflecting the popular style of the late 1920s when the novel was written. The language is certainly dated, although the old-fashioned vocabulary and syntax and the declamatory style of the dialogue may be an attempt to replicate Maori oratory:

“O Kahu!” said Tareha. “Well for thee that thou didst not openly show what was in thy heart! Know this, that death and life are in the hands of Te Moana to bestow on whom he will, for in him are the powers of mind handed down through Ngatoro from remote ages! Bide thy time, therefore, O Impatient One, lest thou be destroyed or thou be smitten with insanity or with the living death of leprosy.”²⁰

The dialogue is peppered with frequent exclamations: ‘Enough!’ ‘Therefore, enough!’ ‘Ah!’ Even descriptive passages are liberally sprinkled with exclamation marks: ‘Gorgeous sunsets! Changing colours of the twilight! The afterglow! Then, when up rose the moon, huge, round, yellow – bright tides of light, and soft peals of laughter, and the piping of flutes, and the chanting!’²¹

Acheson says in his foreword that ‘The pages that follow are wholly in the form of fiction but wherever possible the writer has striven for accuracy of detail and of historical record.’²² The author claims that the story is based on Ngati-Tuwharétoa traditions, and he lists a number of sources, including books by Pakeha writers, and Maori tribal records.²³ He paints a romantic picture of the Maori, whom he describes as ‘The Brown Man of the Southern Pacific – navigator, warrior, mystic, bard – the intellectual and spiritually minded Brown Man of Caucasian descent and ancient lineage known to the world as the Maori of New Zealand’.²⁴ Both the hero and the heroine, though Maori, are white skinned and fair-haired; according to the author, fair-haired Maori (urukéhus) are reasonably common among the Tuwharétoa, and he offers an explanation in the novel in the form of a Viking ancestor named Eric. This seems rather far-fetched, as do some other plot devices (Manaia’s extraordinary physical prowess and psychic powers, for example), but nevertheless *Plume of the Arawas* gives an interesting picture of Maori tribal society. It is noteworthy that while the books about the earlier stages of Maori settlement highlight the hard work

required for survival, the Maori in Acheson's novel lead lives of comparative comfort and have leisure to enjoy themselves; when, that is, they are not engaged in fighting rival tribes.

The same could not be said of the inhabitants of the Chatham Islands in Bernard Gadd's novel *Dare Not Fail; A Story of the Moriori of the Old Chatham Islands* (1987). The last words of the book – 'And she spoke softly words of peace and goodwill to any person who might be coming towards them down the track across the bountiful land that was Rekohu'²⁵ – have an ironic ring, since the book depicts life on Rekohu (the Chathams) as quite the opposite of bountiful. The climate is harsh, food is hard to come by and unappetising, and for much of the time the characters are cold, wet and hungry. They also live in constant fear of angering the spirits, who must be propitiated with appropriate prayers before every action. The story concerns two girls, Niwa and Papa, and a boy, Rei, who are given a task by their elders so they will learn to co-operate and support each other. Rather than accepting the assigned task of birding on a nearby reef, they steal a canoe and set out on a hazardous expedition to catch albatross fledglings on the off-shore islands. On the way they rescue a young man, Wari, the only survivor of a wrecked fishing canoe, and he helps them in their quest. After surviving numerous hardships, including the sinking of their canoe, they return home older and wiser, and with a clearer sense of the importance of the traditional values of their island.

Dare Not Fail is a genuine attempt to depict the society and way of life of pre-European Moriori in fictional form, predating by two years Michael King's non-fiction history, *Moriori: A People Rediscovered* (1989). Gadd supplies many details of day-to-day living, as well as depicting the traditions of the people, including the pacifism derived from the teaching of their ancestor Nunuku. The use of traditional chants and legends helps give a sense of the beliefs which underlie the islanders' lives. In literary terms, *Dare Not Fail* is less successful. The author describes one of the characters telling a story 'in the proper way with no wasteful words to distract the hearers from the meanings of the story,'²⁶ and he has applied the same principles of brevity to his own tale. Unfortunately, this often leads to confusion, as the story jumps from one situation to another with no connecting narrative, and unfamiliar

concepts are not explained. While *Plume of the Arawas* is marred by its sentimental flourishes and florid language, *Dare Not Fail* suffers from the opposite fault – the narrative is so sparse that readers may fail to engage with the story. Another source of confusion is the way the author frequently abbreviates names and replaces the missing letters with apostrophes (for example T' Ih' for Ta Ihi), so that it is not always clear to whom he is referring.²⁷

These novels set during the pre-European period of New Zealand's past are unique in comprising the only group of books in this study in which the narrative is focalized exclusively by Maori (or in case of *Laya*, Polynesian) characters. They are all, however, by non-Maori authors; as noted in Chapter One, no New Zealand historical novels for children and young people have yet been written by Maori writers. According to Clare Bradford:

The fact that most representations of Indigenous peoples and cultures in settler societies have been and continue to be produced by non-Indigenous writers and artists is readily explained by the fact that in these nations it is white, Eurocentric cultures whose practices, perspectives, and narrative traditions dominate literary production and representational modes.²⁸

There has been considerable debate among historians and literary critics about how non-indigenous writers who try to reconstruct historical events from an indigenous perspective can combine Western epistemology, partly dictated by the nature of written sources, with the radically different cosmologies of indigenous oral cultures.²⁹ Terry Goldie, for example, questions whether white writers can 'think indigene', and refers to 'the white failure to penetrate the indigene episteme'.³⁰ This theory has been applied to children's literature in Linda Pavonetti's survey of American historical fiction, which raises the question of whether Black, Hispanic or Native American histories should be addressed only by members of their respective minorities.³¹

Nevertheless, restricting writing on such topics to indigenous authors does not necessarily result in a more culturally authentic text, as Hirini Melbourne has pointed out in relation to New Zealand fiction for children:

While there is a feeling among writers generally, that Maoris must speak for themselves, I doubt very much if this is the only answer in the portraying of Maori

cultural viewpoint in children's fiction. After all, many of them are not born into the cultural framework of their ancestors, therefore, together with *pakeha* writers on Maori themes, they will have to undergo awareness and sensitising experiences. [...] Even when Maori writers are born into their cultural framework, they may still perceive them according to prevailing *pakeha* attitudes!³²

In other words, the 'symbolic systems [...] informed by naturalized assumptions and expectations, which exist in most cases below the level of unconscious thought',³³ which Bradford sees as shaping the way non-indigenous writers represent indigeneity, can, in fact, affect both indigenous and non-indigenous writers who are the product of the same society. In the absence of historical novels written by Maori authors, it is not possible to test this assumption here.

Goldie's discussion of the way indigenous people are presented by non-indigenous writers posits the existence of five commodities in the semiotic field of the indigene – sex, violence, orality, mysticism, and the prehistoric. All of these commodities are utilized by the authors of the historical novels considered in this study, but the last mentioned – the prehistoric – is particularly relevant to the books in this section, in that they 'shape the indigene into an historical artifact, a remnant of a golden age' when indigenous culture was 'true, pure and static.'³⁴ Bradford likewise comments on the prevalence in books by non-indigenous writers of 'nostalgic and reductive conceptions of a Golden Age when humans lived in harmony with the land'.³⁵ This is not confined to fictionalized history; for example, although Anne Salmond in *Two Worlds* describes the concepts of 'a static Golden Age' and 'Traditional Maori society' as 'a colonial creation',³⁶ she portrays pre-contact Maori culture as positively idyllic when compared with European societies of the time. All of the children's books set during the pre-European period give an idealised view of a Maori society living 'in harmony with the land'. The moa-hunters of Sutton's and Orwin's books and the Moriori in *Dare Not Fail* are depicted as being completely in tune with their environment, with highly evolved systems of obtaining food and other necessities which respect (and protect) their resources. They are shown as having an intimate connection with the land, the sea, and the changing seasons, and as living in accordance with sound ecological principles. As such, they are able to survive, indeed thrive, in an environment which may seem inhospitable. *Rangatira* is the only text which shows characters adapting to this environment; the voyagers have to learn

to cope with frost, snow, storms and earthquakes, all of which were unknown in their Pacific Island home, and with the loss of their tropical plants which cannot survive in the colder climate of New Zealand. However, abundant seafood, eels, and birds including moa and kiwi, compensate for the lack of their accustomed food, and by the end of the book the newcomers have become completely acclimatized. Implicit in the pre-contact texts is regret for the loss of the Maori's traditional lifestyle, especially their close, spiritual connection with the land. This nostalgia is made explicit in books set in later periods, in which Maori use their traditional knowledge to help Pakeha characters to survive; for example *Hunter* by Joy Cowley (which is discussed in the following chapter), and a number of books set during the settler period.

Plume of the Arawas, which is set during the classic tribal period, places less emphasis on its protagonists' interaction with the environment, but it also presents a nostalgic version of a 'golden age' when the indigenous culture was 'true, pure and static'.

Some hundreds of warriors could be seen about the marae or along the terraces, and almost without exception they were of fine physique, tall and fleshy, with the well-developed limbs and strong chest characteristic of the Maori man. Their swelling muscles rippled under sleek brown skin as they tumbled about wrestling with each other or practised with their taiahas or spears.

In pleasing contrast were the young women and maidens moving about the pa, many of them pretty and of shapely figure, but all of them graceful as they glided along with the swaying side motion taught them by their mothers from childhood days. [...]

As for the children, they were the embodiment of symmetry and sturdy grace as they dashed about in a state of complete nudity, and were a source of delight and worry to the aged ones who sat in sheltered spots, talking to each other over the vividly-remembered days of their youth, or again, chuckling over the latest bits of gossip and lamenting their inability to keep pace with all the doings in the pa.

In short, life and spirit everywhere; everywhere except in the low-bodied, bushy-tailed, barkless dogs that roamed about, and in some hapless captives who carried water from the springs on the southern side.³⁷

Acheson paints a romantic picture of the Maori as fine physical specimens, living an idyllic lifestyle; although this depends on the labour of the 'hapless captives', whom the author apparently considers of less importance even than the dogs, and who thereafter rate no mention in the narrative.

As well as the concept of a 'golden age', Bradford notes that, in children's texts by non-indigenous authors, indigenous characters are generally assigned a limited repertoire of roles and narrative possibilities:

In the main, these texts represent Indigeneity within a narrow range of character types, such as sage figures, political activists, and alienated figures caught between cultures. The predominant narrative patterns cluster around a small number of possibilities: stories in which white children befriend Indigenous characters, thereby enhancing their own growth as individuals; problem novels featuring the identity formation of Indigenous characters; and a substantial body of historical novels, many of which conform to the pattern common in contemporary realistic novels, featuring Indigenous-white friendships that contribute to the maturation of non-Indigenous figures.³⁸

Some of the roles identified by Bradford, involving interaction between indigenous and white characters, are not relevant to the books about the pre-European period currently under discussion and will be considered in later chapters. Nevertheless, some are applicable, such as the pre-eminence of the sage figure, and the common use of narrative patterns featuring the identity formation of indigenous characters.

The sage figure, or *tohunga*, is connected with Goldie's commodity of mysticism, 'in which the indigene becomes a sign of oracular power, either malevolent, in most nineteenth-century texts, or beneficent, in most contemporary ones'.³⁹ The figure of the *tohunga* features prominently in New Zealand historical fiction for children and, in most cases, characterisation conforms to the pattern identified by Goldie, in that most of the nineteenth-century settler texts which will be discussed in later chapters depict the *tohunga* as an evil and sinister figure. This is also the case in some early twentieth century texts; for example Tareha, the chief *tohunga* in *Plume of the Arawas*, is a malignant and unscrupulous figure who uses supernatural means to influence the Arawa people against their rightful chief, Tuwharétoa. The old *tohunga*, Te Moana, however, who is Tuwharétoa's ally, is a highly respected repository of ancient traditions, which he passes on to Tuwharétoa to prepare him to be the *ariki* of his people. In *Laya*, the old priest Langi is initially presented as a frightening figure: 'Mouwe had given me over to a life of dread with the man whose very name made people's skin crawl, their limbs shake to think of the terrible powers he possessed and the dark things he knew.'⁴⁰ The story imputes magical powers to

Langi – it implies that he has the ability to sense the spirits of the places where the voyagers make landfall, and that he is responsible for conjuring up a water spout to destroy the village of their enemies. However, he is shown in the course of the book to be a wise and farsighted man, who guides the voyagers and keeps alive the stories of the ancestors. He treats Laya kindly, and with his encouragement she develops special abilities so that at the end of the book she is able to take over his role. In the other books set during the pre-European period, *tohunga* are benevolent characters with practical rather than spiritual powers; they are experts in their fields – carving, navigation, making tools, planting *kumara* – and they share their wisdom and knowledge with their young protégés. Both Kotiri in *Moa Hunter* and Ihaka in *Ihaka and the Prophecy* themselves become *tohunga*; in fact the latter book is concerned mainly with the exacting apprenticeship in wood and stone craft that Ihaka serves under the old *tohunga*, Paoa, in order to become his successor.

The narrative pattern of identity formation of the indigenous protagonists is common to all of the books in this section, with the exception of *The Story of Kawau and the Moriori*. The main characters in the other texts all grow and mature through their experiences: be it journeying from home and settling in a new land in *Laya* and *Rangatira*; overcoming physical disability and encountering strangers in *Moa Hunter*; learning new skills in the *Ihaka* books; defeating enemies and leaving the tribe in *Plume of the Arawa*; or facing danger and physical challenges in *Dare Not Fail*. The protagonists are all successful in their quests, and end the books with an awareness of their role in life, and the confidence that they can fulfill it. Narratives of individual development of this nature are common in children's literature, and embody the Western idea of personal growth, exemplified in the *bildungsroman*. Bradford therefore finds these narrative sequences problematic when they occur in books with Indigenous settings, contending that they:

position readers to align themselves with characters “like them” – that is, characters whose progress from youth to maturity accords with schemata familiar from countless mainstream Western texts, literary and popular, in which protagonists encounter obstacles or dangers and attain enhanced levels of awareness or self-regard. [Such] texts afford representations of Indigenous cultures that are all too readily caught up in the universalizing formulations of the human subject.⁴¹

Bradford finds other ‘universalizing formulations’ implicit in *Ihaka and the Prophecy*, maintaining that Orwin promotes cultural continuity based on the maintenance of hierarchies of class and lineage, as well as the importance of tradition and heritage, and values such as stability and respect for authority. ‘Directed towards young New Zealanders (Pakeha and Maori), this novel constructs Maori culture as an inheritance, the land as peopled by proud and noble ancestors.’⁴² At the end of the book *Ihaka* is about to leave the place where he grew up, but he knows that, like the godwit, he will someday return.

This promise of a return to origins resonates with cultural anxieties over the fact that many young New Zealanders leave the country to travel and work, making lives for themselves as expatriates. The closure of the narrative thus positions readers to extrapolate from the precolonial setting a set of values presented as transcendent and timeless: love of one’s place of origin, loyalty, and the resolve to return. The novel’s appeal to notions of cultural continuity effectively displaces the cultural and historical differences between its setting and that of its readers, producing *Ihaka* as a model young New Zealander.⁴³

While readers of the age targeted by this book are not likely to be overly concerned with anxieties about the exodus of young New Zealanders on their ‘big OE’, the point that the text acts to efface differences between Maori and Pakeha is a valid one, echoing that made by Melbourne in 1980:

So long as children’s fiction continues its role of conveying prevailing attitudes and opinions within the general society, the reading material children are exposed to can only help to perpetuate what is already known to the *pakeha*, if not explicitly to the Maori, in damaging ways. The lasting image of the Maori that remains in children’s minds is that the Maori is only different from the *pakeha* in superficial ways; colour, food preferences, songs and dances.⁴⁴

Bradford suggests that books about indigenous life prior to European contact can ‘imply (in the main) non-Indigenous readers positioned in quite complex ways – as outsiders to Indigenous cultures but also as citizens of nations where tropes of Indigeneity contribute to cultural identities’.⁴⁵ Books such as these allow Pakeha readers to feel an affinity with the Maori past that is part of New Zealand’s heritage, but possibly at the cost of subsuming the indigenous culture within Western schemata.

While the texts under discussion are set well before New Zealand was settled by European colonists, ‘such pre-Contact narratives are inevitably shadowed by readers’ awareness of the impending events of colonization’;⁴⁶ and most of them are concerned in some way with the process of colonization. This is explicit in *Laya* and *Rangatira*, both of which assert the right of the colonizers to settle in other lands. In *Laya*, the travellers reject several possible islands which are already inhabited and search until they find an uninhabited island of their own. At one of their landing places they are welcomed by the tribe who already live there, but eventually leave because to stay would mean losing their autonomy and accepting the rule of the island’s overlord. This desire for independence, which also motivated the departure from their original homeland, recurs as a motive for emigration in later texts dealing with the European settlers.

Rangatira has even closer parallels with European settlement, in that when the voyagers arrive in New Zealand they displace or marginalise the earlier inhabitants, or defeat them in armed conflict. As already noted, the new migrants feel themselves to be racially superior to the ‘Tangata Whenua’ whom they stigmatize as dirty, lazy and dishonest, and they feel justified in capturing them and making use of their labour and their local knowledge. Michael King points out that the existence of the ‘Tangata Whenua’ or Moriori had been disproved by Henry Skinner in the 1920s, but ‘the Moriori myth’ continued to enjoy currency because of its ‘pleasing and convenient resonances’;⁴⁷

The very notion that Maori had displaced and colonized a more primitive people was both evidence of *their* superiority and an implicit justification for what Europeans, representatives of a still higher order of civilisation, had done to Maori in turn (“in colonizing you and your country we did no more than that which you had already done to Moriori”).⁴⁸

The treatment of the Tangata Whenua by the Polynesian settlers is identical to the treatment of the Maori by European settlers in many of the novels set during the early settlement period. In *Rangatira*, as in the settler novels, readers are asked to identify with the colonists rather than with the original occupants of the land, who are accorded little sympathy. The sentiments expressed by Rehua, the leader of the new

settlers, are similar to the attitudes to Maori in novels set in later periods: “‘They are a poor miserable folk, who were among the first to settle here. Now they live like animals. [...] They will cause no trouble by saying this land is theirs.’”⁴⁹ *Rangatira* also anticipates the New Zealand Wars, in that the newcomers fight with other tribes for the right to remain in their new country, and successfully defend the land they have claimed. Themes of national identity which recur in colonial period texts are also present; just as in these books, the first generation of settlers want to return to their place of origin which they still regard as ‘home’, even if only for a visit, while those born in New Zealand consider themselves natives of this country and have little interest in their ancestral home.

The Story of Kawau and the Moriori describes several waves of colonization. The original inhabitants of Kawau, the Tangata-whenuas or Muri-whenuas, a race of small, dark-skinned people whom the author speculates may have come from India, leave the island when the Moriori arrive, even though the Moriori are a peaceful race who ‘did not slay the Tangata-Whenuas they found on the island or molest them’.⁵⁰ The pacifist Moriori are subsequently displaced by the fierce Maori who kill all of the inhabitants of Kawau. ‘The Maori drove the Morioris out of New Zealand after slaying many, and they went to the Chatham and other islands, and, like the great moa they hunted, they are now extinct.’⁵¹ The last wave of colonization, by the Europeans, is depicted as inevitable and welcome. Nika the Moriori greets the narrator by saying, “‘Hail! O White Man; I salute you; I greet you. [...] You are of the great white race that our prophets told us would some day come and govern these islands.’”⁵² Later he says, “‘You are a clever and just people and such things as I have narrated will never happen under your Government, and may your people long govern these islands in happiness and prosperity’”⁵³ The White Man is seen as a worthy successor to the peaceful Moriori, and both races are deemed acceptable colonizers; unlike the Maori, who are described as treacherous and superstitious cannibals. However, the negative picture of Maori in this story is at variance with the next story in the book, ‘The Legend of Kawau’, which presents the Maori as hard workers and ardent lovers. *The Story of Kawau and the Moriori* is a reflection of Stuckey’s views on colonization and racial purity, which he expresses more overtly later in the book when he urges young people to have more children, out of wedlock

if necessary, to populate the British colonies; and praises Hitler for ‘clearing out all foreigners and Jews, sterilising the unfit and building up a nation of well-bred, strong, healthy people’.⁵⁴ While these attitudes are now recognised as offensive, and were contested at the time, they were probably shared by some of Stuckey’s fellow New Zealanders during the 1930s when this book was written.

Moa Hunter, written nearly fifty years later, provides a more complex view of colonization. On one hand, the reaction of the moa hunters to the unfamiliar and threatening aspects of Maori culture mirrors that of the Pakeha colonists at the time of European settlement. For example, Kotiri’s description of his first sight of a tattooed face has parallels in many settler novels:

I looked up at the chief, and a little shiver of fear trickled down my back. This is no man’s face, I thought wildly. Why is it so dark? Why does it look almost black – those swirling lines cut into the flesh, twisting in curved patterns all over the skin? It must be some evil spirit.⁵⁵

For Kotiri, like the Pakeha, the Maori with their tattoos, their carvings, and their aggressive ways are ‘other’, and therefore threatening. On the other hand, the encounter between the moa hunters and the newcomers who have come to settle in their country could be read as representing the situation of the Maori at the time of European settlement; the moa hunters are the colonized who, like the Maori, are overwhelmed by a more technologically advanced culture.

Moa Hunter, in effect, anticipates the arrival of the European settlers and provides a paradigm for the relationship between colonizers and colonized. The story emphasises the need for compromises, for accepting the differences between the different groups, and working together for mutual benefit. However, Sutton suggests that colonization comes at a cost to the colonized people, for while Kotiri’s people gain kumara crops to keep them from starvation and learn how to build better houses and make finer clothes, they have to abandon their pacifist way of life and learn how to defend themselves in the new era of ‘fighting and bloodshed and killing’.⁵⁶ Just as the muskets introduced by the Pakeha spread among the Maori and fuelled the musket wars, so the war clubs introduced by the Maori are taken up by the moa hunters and used in inter-tribal warfare. This process is seen as inevitable; the

tohunga who makes the weapons tells Kotiri, ““We cannot swim against the current.””⁵⁷ The eventual arrival of the Pakeha in their ‘great canoes’ which is foreshadowed on the last page is also inevitable, and Sutton ends the book with an unequivocal piece of advice for colonized people – ‘The world is changing, and we must change with it.’⁵⁸

Plume of the Arawas is set during the tribal period and does not feature the arrival of settlers from over the sea; nevertheless, Tuwharétoa’s quest to conquer the land around Lake Taupo is seen as a continuation of the colonizing voyage of the Arawa canoe: ““Art thou sure, O Ariki, that the prow of the Arawa canoe is pointing in the right direction? Should it not be pointing to the south, to the Great Lake Taupo, to the Taupo-nui-a-Tia, to Taupo-Moana the Inland Sea?””⁵⁹ Tuwharétoa’s rationale for depriving the incumbent tribe, the Ngatihotu, of their land is similar to the justification sometimes given in later texts for Pakeha colonization – the inhabitants are inferior to the newcomers; they are weak and lacking in spirit so they do not deserve the land; and they are in any case dying out. Rerémoa, the daughter of the Ngatihotu chief, tries to prevent the subjugation of her tribe, but realises this is impossible, and her marriage to Tuwharétoa symbolises the assimilation of conquered and conquerors. *Plume of the Arawas* also privileges the notion of whiteness: Tuwharétoa, his sister Marama and his lover Rerémoa are fair-skinned, blond-haired, blue-eyed urukéhu of ‘an ancient and almost pure Caucasian strain’,⁶⁰ whose beauty and physical and mental powers are far superior to those of their darker-skinned companions.

All of the historical novels on the pre-European period are produced by and reflect the society of the time in which they were written. Underlying both novels written during the 1930s – *Plume of the Arawas* and *The Story of Kawau and the Moriori* – is the unquestioned assumption of white superiority, drawing on the social Darwinist ideas current at the time. This racial bias also surfaces in *Rangatira*, which was published during the 1950s, but is less apparent in the later texts. The publication during the 1970s and 1980s of five books set during the pre-Contact period and dealing with Maori or Polynesian characters is possibly linked to an increased interest in Maori issues in New Zealand during the 1980s. The rise of feminism around this

time was less influential; in Sutton and Orwin's books girls have very minor roles as marriage partners for the male protagonists, and only the two by Bernard Gadd feature strong and capable female protagonists.

Gadd acknowledges that his writing is motivated by a concern for social justice: 'I feel strongly that New Zealand desperately needs writers who feel a sense of outrage at our contemporary society and have an urgent passion for social justice and for equity.'⁶¹ As such, he is the only author to respond to another major political movement of the 1980s, the campaign to make New Zealand nuclear-free. This is referred to obliquely in *Laya* in the naming of the characters, most of whom have Polynesian names whose meaning is given in a list at the end of the book (for example, Laya means a sail and Fose is paddle). The name of Langi, the wise tohunga, is not included in the list so was presumably invented by Gadd; and it seems probable that it is a tribute to David Lange who, as the Prime Minister at the time this book was written, had recently declared New Zealand nuclear free and was active in protesting against the French nuclear tests in the Pacific where this book is set. This idea is given credence by the fact that a complimentary letter by David Lange is printed on the back cover of Gadd's subsequent book. *Dare Not Fail*, written in 1987 in the aftermath of the *Rainbow Warrior* affair, describes the Chathams' pacifist society and stresses non-violent ways of resolving conflicts. In his letter Lange refers to the book 'helping to bring to life an almost forgotten society in which war was forbidden and there was respect for all living things'⁶²; in other words a suitable model for a nuclear-free country.

While the texts discussed in this chapter have generally been able to present a reasonably authentic picture of the material culture of the pre-contact period, based on available historical (mainly archaeological) evidence, it is impossible, in the absence of written records, for them to reconstruct the mores of pre-European society. These books, therefore, while ostensibly set in the distant past, reveal more about the values of New Zealand society at the time they were written than those of the periods in which they are set. Written records do exist for the early contacts between Maori and Europeans in New Zealand, but the fact that they were produced by the European visitors and do not reflect the experiences of the indigenous inhabitants creates

challenges for the writers of historical fiction set during this period. The way these challenges have been met forms the basis of the next chapter.

¹ Norman B. Tindale and Harold Lindsay, *Rangatira*, illus by Douglas F. Maxted (Wellington: Reed, 1959), p.71.

² The historical information in this paragraph is drawn mainly from King's *Penguin History of New Zealand*.

³ Atholl Anderson reviews the available evidence in an essay in *Disputed Histories: Imagining New Zealand's Pasts* ed. by Tony Ballantyne and Brian Moloughney (Dunedin: Otago University Press, 2006). Other information in this paragraph is based on King, pp. 38-60, and on *The Oxford History of New Zealand*, 2nd edn, pp. 3-27.

⁴ This historical information is also taken in the main from King.

⁵ *The First New Zealanders* by Philip Houghton (1980); *The Pre-History of New Zealand* by Janet Davidson (1984); and *From the Beginning: The Archeology of the Maori* ed. by John M. Wilson (1987) presented the pre-European period in a form accessible to non-historians.

⁶ K. R. Howe, ed. *Vaka Moana: The Voyages of the Ancestors: The Discovery and Settlement of the Pacific* (Auckland: David Bateman, 2006).

⁷ Bernard Gadd, *Laya* (Auckland: Te Ropu Kahurangi, 1985), p.78.

⁸ Betty Gilderdale, *A Sea Change: 145 Years of New Zealand Junior Fiction* (Auckland: Longman Paul, 1982), p.32.

⁹ 'Tangata whenua: obs. A 'pre-Fleet' people once, according to a discarded theory, supposed to have settled New Zealand before the Maori, and often wrongly assigned the name of "Moriiori".' Harry W. Orsman, ed., *Dictionary of New Zealand English* (Auckland: Oxford University Press, 1997), p.810.

¹⁰ *Rangatira*, p.196.

¹¹ Tindale & Lindsay, p.54.

¹² Tindale & Lindsay, p.11.

¹³ Eve Sutton, *Moa Hunter*, illus. by Bernard Brett (London: Hamish Hamilton, 1978), dustjacket.

¹⁴ Sutton, p.55.

¹⁵ Sutton, p.112.

¹⁶ Janet M. Davidson, 'The Polynesian Foundation' in *The Oxford History of New Zealand*, ed. by Geoffrey W. Rice, 2nd edn. (Auckland: Oxford University Press, 1992), pp.3-27 (p.18).

¹⁷ In *Beneath Southern Skies* by Tom Fitzgibbon and Barbara Spiers, page 141, Sutton refers to the research she undertakes for historical stories. She does not give any details, but it seems likely that she based her description of moa hunter society on Roger Duff's *The Moa Hunter Period of Maori Culture* (1950).

¹⁸ Orwin undertakes 'a huge amount of research', using material from libraries and museums and visiting the site to familiarize herself with the landscape and vegetation of the setting. (Answer to questionnaire.)

¹⁹ Lawrence Jones, 'The Novel' in *Oxford History of New Zealand Literature in English*, ed. by Terry Sturm, 2nd edn (Auckland: Oxford University Press, 1998), pp.119-244 (p.137).

²⁰ Frank Acheson, *Plume of the Arawas* (Wellington: Reed, 1930), p.17.

²¹ Acheson, p.205.

²² Acheson, p.viii.

²³ 'In this connection [the writer] freely acknowledges help received from many interesting and instructive works of reference such as those of Mr Elsdon Best, Mr James Cowan, the late John White, and others. Also, he thanks his friends and interpreters the young chiefs Puataata A.Kerehi, Pei te Hurinui, and Wharekaihua Ngahana for their help with tribal records and translations, and gratefully remembers his indebtedness to his friends the late lamented chiefs Tuturu Hone Teri and Hoko Patena, and especially to the departed ariki the Honourable Te Heuheu Tukino, M.L.C.' Acheson, p.viii.

²⁴ Acheson, p.vii.

²⁵ Bernard Gadd, *Dare not Fail* (Auckland: Te Ropu Kahurangi, 1987), p.115.

²⁶ Gadd, *Dare not Fail*, p.115.

²⁷ Gadd is here following the orthography and vocabulary established by Alexander Shand in *The Moriiori people of the Chatham Islands: their history and traditions* (Wellington: Polynesian Society of New Zealand, 1911).

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- ²⁸ Bradford, *Unsettling Narratives*, p.71.
- ²⁹ See, for example, Green and Troup, p.284.
- ³⁰ Goldie, p.9.
- ³¹ Linda M. Pavonetti, 'The Evolution of Historical Fiction for Children', in *Children's Literature Remembered*, ed. by Linda M. Pavonetti (Westport: Libraries Unlimited, 2004), pp.157-177.
- ³² Sydney[=Hirini] Melbourne, 'The Portrayal of the Maori in New Zealand Children's Fiction', in *A Track to Unknown Water: Proceedings of the Second Pacific Rim Conference on Children's Literature* ed. by Stella Lees (Carlton: Melbourne State College, 1980), pp. 80-89 (p.87).
- ³³ Bradford, *Unsettling Narratives*, p.72.
- ³⁴ Goldie, p.17.
- ³⁵ Bradford, *Unsettling Narratives*, p.94.
- ³⁶ Anne Salmond, *Two Worlds: First Meetings Between Maori and Europeans 1642-1772* (Auckland: Viking, 1993), p.431.
- ³⁷ Acheson, p.20.
- ³⁸ Bradford, *Unsettling Narratives*, p.72.
- ³⁹ Goldie, p.16.
- ⁴⁰ Gadd, *Laya*, p.10.
- ⁴¹ Bradford, *Unsettling Narratives*, p.113.
- ⁴² Bradford, *Unsettling Narratives*, p.107.
- ⁴³ Bradford, *Unsettling Narratives*, p.107.
- ⁴⁴ Melbourne, p.88.
- ⁴⁵ Bradford, *Unsettling Narratives*, p.105.
- ⁴⁶ Bradford, *Unsettling Narratives*, p.105.
- ⁴⁷ King, p.58.
- ⁴⁸ King, p.57.
- ⁴⁹ Tindale and Lindsay, p.69.
- ⁵⁰ A. W. Stuckey, *The Story of Kawau and the Moriori*, illus. unknown (Auckland: Queen City Press, 1930), p.33.
- ⁵¹ Stuckey, p.31.
- ⁵² Stuckey, p.13.
- ⁵³ Stuckey, p.31.
- ⁵⁴ Stuckey, p.95.
- ⁵⁵ Sutton, p.55.
- ⁵⁶ Sutton, p.112.
- ⁵⁷ Sutton, p.109.
- ⁵⁸ Sutton, 112.
- ⁵⁹ Acheson, p.28.
- ⁶⁰ Acheson, p.vii.
- ⁶¹ Tom Fitzgibbon and Barbara Spiers, *Beneath Southern Skies: New Zealand Children's Book Authors and Illustrators* (Auckland: Ashton Scholastic, 1993), p.60.
- ⁶² Gadd, *Dare Not Fail*, back cover.

CHAPTER THREE
MARINERS, MUSKETS AND MISSIONARIES:
FICTION SET DURING THE EARLY CONTACT PERIOD, 1642-1840

“Lawless days, lawless men, and a lawless land!”¹

After many centuries of isolation, what Michael King has characterised as New Zealand’s ‘membrane of distance’² was perforated by explorers from the other side of the world. The first recorded sighting of this country by Europeans was by Abel Tasman in 1642, but it was not till 126 years later, with James Cook’s expedition of 1769, that Europeans landed in New Zealand and interacted with the land and people. Cook was soon followed by other explorers, French and Spanish as well as English; and their reports of New Zealand’s abundant timber and flax and the large number of seals and whales in the surrounding oceans were responsible for attracting traders eager to exploit these resources. The first sealing gang was working in Dusky Sound by 1792, and sealers operated around the south of the South Island, the Chathams and the sub-Antarctic islands until the 1830s, by which time the seal population had been virtually wiped out. Whaling had a much greater impact on New Zealand, in that it led to the establishment of coastal settlements, either as stations for shore-based whaling, or as ports for ocean-going whaling vessels.

As a result of these settlements, Maori were introduced to European customs and technology which had a great impact on their traditional way of life. Conversely, a number of Europeans, often whalers or escaped convicts, became ‘Pakeha Maori’ and adopted Maori customs. Trade in timber (mainly kauri) and flax was well established by the 1820s, and there was also trade in fruit, vegetables, and other produce. An unfortunate side-effect of the growth in trade between Maori and Pakeha was the exposure to diseases to which Maori had no immunity, and, maybe even more deadly, the introduction of European firearms. The musket wars, between about 1822 and 1840, led to over 20,000 Maori being killed and many more dispossessed or enslaved. One of the factors which brought the musket wars to a close was the increasing number of Maori who had converted to Christianity. Samuel Marsden launched the first Christian mission in New Zealand in 1814, and over the next few decades

missionary stations had been established by all of the major Christian denominations. By the time the Treaty of Waitangi was signed in 1840 the 'early contact' period could be considered over, as sealers, whalers, traders and missionaries were succeeded by immigrants keen to settle in this new land.

There are no New Zealand historical novels for children about either Tasman or Cook's voyages (although Cook's expeditions, including his exploration of New Zealand, are described from the viewpoint of Nicholas Young in both *He Went with Captain Cook* (1952) by English author Josephine Kamm, and *Young Nick's Head* (2001) by American writer Karen Hesse; and Cook's boyhood and early expeditions are the subject of *James Cook, Royal Navy* (1970) by the Australian writer George Finkel).³ The only novel set during the period of European exploration and discovery is Ronald Syme's *The Spaniards Came at Dawn*, which deals with an imagined visit by a Spanish ship in the period between Tasman's and Cook's voyages. Syme (who was born in England but educated in New Zealand⁴) was the author of many adventure stories, often based on real historical events and characters, such as *Cortez, Conqueror of Mexico*, *Champlain of the St Lawrence*, and *John Smith of Virginia*. However, *The Spaniards Came at Dawn* (1959), one of two books he wrote with a New Zealand setting, has only a tenuous connection with the historical record. Syme describes the inspiration for his book (written at the behest of his former English master at Wanganui Collegiate) in the Foreword:

When Captain Cook made his first voyage to New Zealand in 1769-70, he sighted a massive wooden cross high in the hills above Queen Charlotte's [sic] Sound. [...] The Maori could give him no information regarding the cross but they said it had been there for many generations. Sometimes they put flowers on it as their forefathers had done. Secondly, about seven or eight years ago, a Spanish morion was dredged up from the waters of a New Zealand harbour.

On these two strange facts I have based a story.⁵

With so few 'facts' to go on, the story is necessarily wholly speculative, and Syme has given his imagination free rein in creating this fast-paced adventure.

In 1670, fifteen-year-old Nick Burton is on his first voyage in his father's ship *Lucky Increase*, engaged in looting and robbing Spanish settlements in South America. On their homeward journey across the Pacific they encounter two Spanish galleons, and

in the ensuing battle the *Lucky Increase* is destroyed, and the sixteen surviving Englishmen are taken aboard the *Vittoria* as prisoners. The damaged ship is driven by storms to New Zealand where the Spaniards set up a base while they repair the ship. Fighting breaks out between the local Maori (Ngaitahu)⁶ and the Spaniards when the Maori steal some tools. In contrast, the English prisoners, in particular Nick and another young crewman, Abel, become friends with the Maori, and are able to warn the Ngaitahu chief when a Spanish raid is planned on the pa, giving the Maori time to escape. The Ngaitahu return with reinforcements, the English prisoners manage to file through their fetters and attack from within the fort, and the Spaniards are defeated; a mere thirty-four of the four hundred survive, though only fifty-three Maori are killed. The Maori help to bury the dead Spaniards on a hill and erect a large wooden cross over the grave. The surviving Spaniards agree to help sail the *Vittoria*, now under English command, to the East Indies. The Ngaitahu ask to go with them as far as their ancestral island of Tumu-te-Varo-Varo as they fear inter-tribal warfare, and they wish to return to the warm climate of the Pacific islands. Although it has been three hundred years since their arrival in New Zealand, their tohunga unerringly navigates them to their homeland, where they are warmly welcomed. The book ends as the *Vittoria* leaves the island bound for the East Indies and England.

Syme spent much of his life in England and *The Spaniards Came at Dawn* is written very much from an English perspective. The English seamen, even though they have robbed and murdered their way down the South American coast, are presented as brave and honourable, while the Spaniards are arrogant, violent, and unreasonable. (The only Spaniard who treats the British prisoners fairly turns out to have had an English grandfather.) The language also has an English flavour; the natives approach through an 'open meadow', and when Nick and Abel visit the Maori pa, they walk down the 'village street' to the 'hall'.⁷ The plot has various implausible features, such as the fact that Nick and Abel are not put in fetters at night like their fellow crewmen, and the speed with which they learn to speak Maori. The reverse migration of the Ngaitahu to their Pacific homeland also stretches credibility. The dramatic black and white illustrations by well-known English illustrator William Stobbs further undermine any feeling of authenticity, as they make little attempt to represent

the setting or characters accurately. For example, while the text describes the Maori as ‘heavy-bodied, thick legged men’ wearing only ‘a short, whitish kilt-like garment or a tightly-wrapped waistcloth’⁸, the illustrations show slender figures in grass (flax?) skirts.



Illustration by William Stobbs for *The Spaniards Came at Dawn* by Ronald Syme, p.57.

The Spaniards Came at Dawn is probably best summed up by Elsie Locke, who describes it as a ‘blood and thunder yarn’, and adds: ‘I hope a child would read it with enough grains of salt to disperse any suspicions of reality.’⁹

The other historical novels for children about the early contact period are (with one exception) set during the early 1800s, starting with Mona Tracy's *Lawless Days: A Tale of Adventure in Old New Zealand and the South Seas* published in 1928. The story begins in 1815 when a fourteen-year-old English boy, Dick Arden, accidentally stows away on the *Currency Lass*, a convict ship bound for New South Wales. He is befriended by the Captain and helps prevent a mutiny by the convicts, thereby earning the hatred of their ringleader, Folsom, who reappears at various pivotal points of the narrative. After a few weeks in Sydney, the ship sails on its return voyage to England, with Dick and twelve-year-old Betsy Morell as passengers. When the *Currency Lass* stops for spars in New Zealand it is attacked by hostile Maori, who murder the crew and set fire to the ship, but Dick and Betsy escape with the help of Tupi, a friendly Maori boy, and set out for Samuel Marsden's missionary station in the Bay of Islands. Dick runs into a Maori ambush, is rescued by the crew of a British ship, and taken to Hobart. While there he is kidnapped and taken aboard a sealing ship on its way to the islands south of New Zealand. Dick and another boy, Barry, contrive to escape on an uninhabited and inhospitable island, and spend several miserable months there before being rescued and returned to New Zealand. There they are reunited with the faithful Tupi, rescue Betsy who is being held prisoner by the Hauraki tribe, and return to Sydney to a heroes' welcome.

The plot of *Lawless Days* is very exciting, if not always plausible, with a definite reliance on fortunate coincidences. Dick survives, among other things, mutinies, massacres, kidnapping, a winter on a sub-Antarctic island, and outbreaks of typhus and scurvy, without coming to any harm, and with his British pluck undented. However, Tracy paints lively pictures of life in a Maori pa, on a seal island, and in the fledgling colonies of Sydney and Hobart; and gives a reasonably accurate account of the cultural situation in New Zealand during the early nineteenth century. She portrays all the groups who were present at the time – traders, sealers, convicts, missionaries, Maori, and 'Pakeha Maori' – and shows how the early encounters between Maori and European were often marred by misunderstanding. The words she ascribes to the Reverend Samuel Marsden at the end of the book (based on sentiments he expressed in letters) summarise her theme:

“Lawless days, lawless men, and a lawless land!” he said sorrowfully. “Ah, Mr Lord, the white men who sail the Southern Seas do not know the harvest they sow! They despoil my vineyard, they rob my fold of its lambs. When will the world awaken to the fact that the New Zealanders are no mere thoughtless savages, but the finest aboriginal race on the earth? [...]”

The King’s law does not run in New Zealand. There are times when I could wish from the bottom of my heart that it did; but at others I see that to make New Zealand a British colony were to bring to these shores even more lawless men, more deeds of violence.”¹⁰

Maori may be ‘the finest aboriginal race on the earth’, but Tracy does not present a romanticised view of their culture. They emerge as aggressive and ferocious fighters with some alarming customs; though, when Dick and Barry feel ‘sick with horror’ after they witness a chief clubbing to death a young girl who has accidentally touched his head, Peters, the pa’s Pakeha Maori, justifies the killing and tells them: “‘Twas the girl’s own fault. She touched his sacred head!’”¹¹ Not surprisingly, even though Dick says philosophically, “‘I suppose the New Zealanders are just like any other race. [...] There are bad natives and good natives’”¹², none of the main characters wish to stay in New Zealand; and the happy ending has Dick, Betsy, Barry and even Tupi going to Sydney to live.

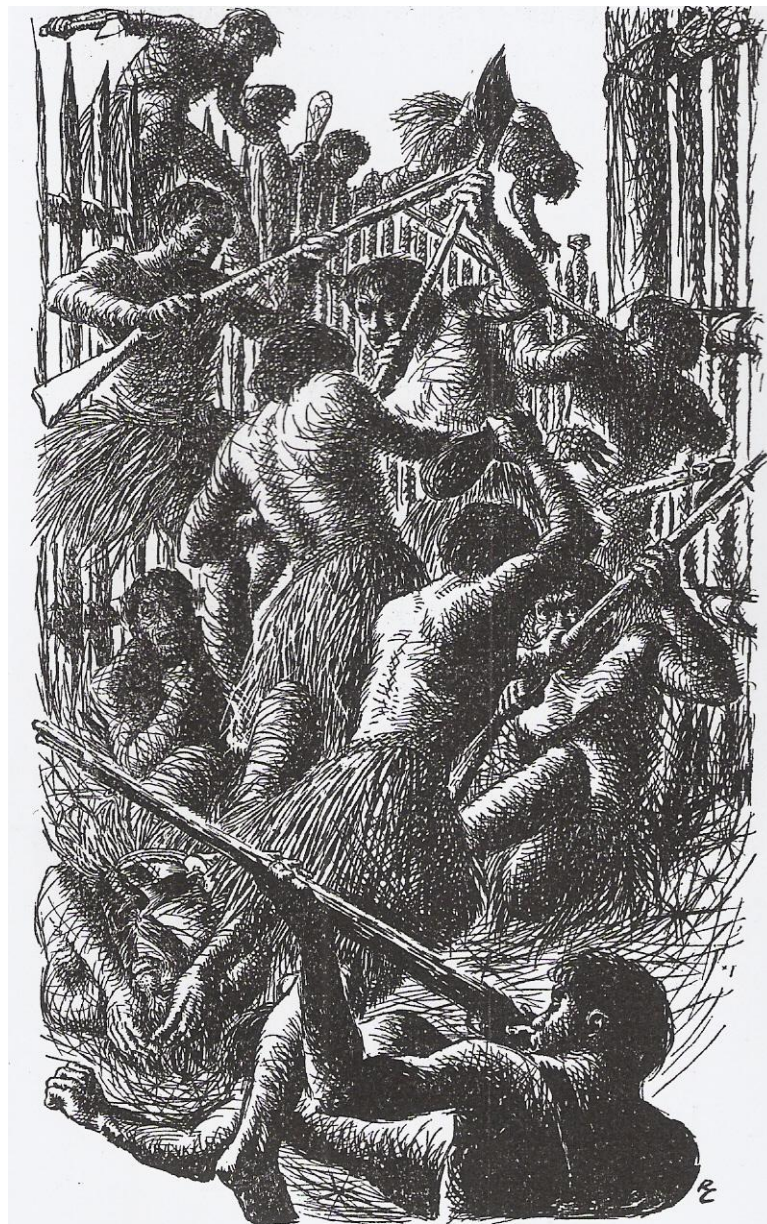
Tracy’s other novel set during the early contact period, *Martin Thorn – Adventurer* (1930), begins in 1795 and takes its eponymous hero on a series of escapades around the Pacific, including two visits to New Zealand. On the first occasion, sixteen-year-old Martin, who has stowed away on a boat from Sydney, spends three months at a sealing camp in Dusky Sound, ‘a spot surely the wildest and most rugged in the world’.¹³ His second visit to New Zealand is briefer but more dramatic: there is a fight with a Yankee pirate ship whose crew have stolen all the sealskins from another sealing camp, and a subsequent stop to get fresh food at a harbour in Northland leads to an altercation with the local Maori. Although the ship’s captain warns the crew to be on guard as ‘the New Zealanders were known to be fierce eaters of men’,¹⁴ the Maori are friendly and willing to trade. However, they abduct Martin’s friend Dinty, as they have never seen a white woman before and are under the impression that she is a goddess and will bring them luck. In the struggle to rescue Dinty, one of the Maori is shot, and presumably killed – ‘I saw the big savage totter and fall, clutching his breast’.¹⁵ The ship then departs for further adventures in the South Seas,

culminating in the rescue of Martin's father, who is being held prisoner by the Spanish in Guam. The book ends with Martin about to return to England with his father to resume their former lives. As in *Lawless Days*, there is no suggestion that the characters would want to stay in New Zealand; although one young man boldly predicts that, "Even on this wild New Zealand coast we may yet see a thriving colony."¹⁶

Pitama (1938) by John L. Ewing is in direct contrast to *Lawless Days* and *Martin Thorn – Adventurer*; its hero is a Maori boy rather than a visiting Pakeha, and the brief story concerns inter-tribal warfare during the musket wars, based on actual events which occurred in 1832.¹⁷ Although it is set during the early contact period, all of the characters are Maori, and Pakeha are not mentioned. However the story demonstrates one of the negative effects of the arrival of Europeans – the introduction of muskets which facilitated the bloodshed of the musket wars. When Te Rauparaha and his followers attack the Ngaitahu pa at Kaiapoi in the South Island, Pitama, the chief's son, successfully summons help. However, after a siege lasting several months, the pa is captured and Pitama is imprisoned. He manages to escape and rejoin his father, and the last few paragraphs describe how they and their ally Taiaroa get their revenge on Te Rauparaha's men a year later by ambushing and defeating them at the mouth of the Wairau River. This is the only book for children on the topic of the musket wars (and one of the few historical novels in this chapter written entirely from a Maori perspective), but it describes only two incidents – the attack on Kaiapoi pa and the subsequent ambush – and does not place them in the wider historical context. No reason is given for Te Rauparaha's actions, other than that his previous attacks on the pa have been unsuccessful. Because the point of view is that of Pitama, Te Rauparaha is represented as a villain, even though the Ngaitahu are also aggressive.

Pitama is very brief (only thirty-two pages), and told in matter-of-fact style which is more concerned with imparting factual information than re-creating the atmosphere of the time. There are few characters: the only ones who are named are Pitama, his father Whakauira, their ally Taiaroa, and Te Rauparaha, and there is no mention of Pitama's mother or any other family or friends. The author does not create an

emotional connection to any of the characters, so there is no grief for those killed in the fighting. In any case, Pitama and his father escape unharmed from both battles, and the casualties are described in very general terms; both Ngaitahu and Ngatitoa are simply 'overwhelmed' in their turn. The illustrations, by renowned New Zealand illustrator Russell Clark, give a more realistic view of the fighting. Presumably in deference to the age of the intended readers, the author omits the more grisly details given by Harry C. Evison in *Te Wai Pounamu*, such as the fact that the captured chiefs were 'ceremonially hanged by the heels, disembowelled and eaten'.¹⁸



The attack came early one morning.

John and Hoani by Valerie Grayland (1962) was published twenty-four years after *Pitama*, and reverts to the more usual practice of focalizing the narrative through a non-Maori protagonist. It tells the simple story of a missionary family – John and his parents, Mr and Mrs Grey – who arrive in New Zealand in 1825 and establish a mission station in Northland. The book is clearly intended for younger readers, as indicated by the format (seventy-five pages of large type with numerous illustrations) and by the age of the protagonists (John and Hoani are both seven). Consequently, little historical background is provided, and the reasons for the family coming to New Zealand and the impact of the mission on the Maori are not explored. Instead the book gives a positive picture of the contact between Maori and newcomers: the Maori readily accept the missionaries, and John's initial fear of the tattooed Maori and their pa with its 'horrible' carvings rapidly vanishes. 'John sometimes visited the pa and could not understand why he had once been frightened of it. It was such a friendly place'.¹⁹ The cordial relationship between Maori and Pakeha is symbolised by the friendship between John and Hoani, the son of Tara, the local chief. At first they can communicate only through an interpreter, until Mr Grey persuades Tara to allow Hoani to attend the mission school so that he can learn English and 'white man's ways'.²⁰ There is no indication that John learns to speak Maori, in spite of his frequent visits to the pa. Although the final scene of the book – both boys together ringing the school bell to celebrate the return of their fathers from a long canoe voyage – could be seen as effacing the differences between the races, the narrative as a whole asserts the superiority of John and the British culture he represents and implies that 'white man's ways' will prevail.



Illustration by Anne Linton for *John and Hoani* by Valerie Grayland, p.75.

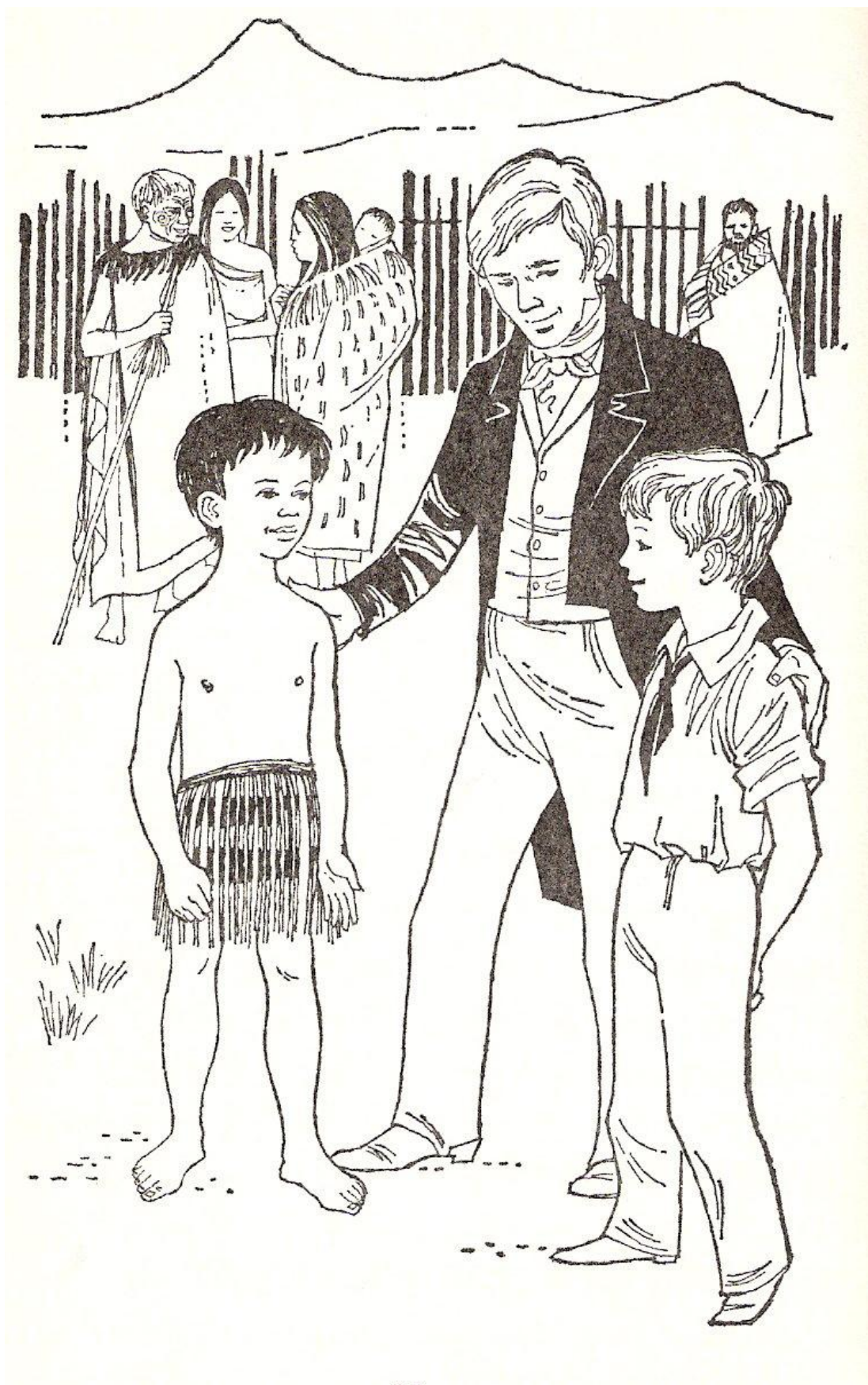


Illustration by Anne Linton for *John and Hoani* by Valerie Grayland, p.30.

Cecil and Celia Manson's *The Adventures of Johnny van Bart*, published in 1965, a few years after *John and Hoani*, harks back to the adventure story format of *Lawless Days* and covers similar territory, with an intrepid English lad, a plucky English girl, and their faithful Maori friend surviving a number of exciting adventures in New Zealand's far north. (The Mansons' debt to Tracy is underlined by the fact that in both books the ship which brings the hero to New Zealand is called the *Currency Lass*.²¹) The story is set slightly later, during the 1830s, and revolves round the rather unlikely premise of a twelve-year-old boy, on the run from the penal colony of Hobart, being adopted as the son of a Maori chief and becoming, by the age of sixteen, the revered chief of his tribe.²² The old chief bequeaths Johnny (or Honi, as he becomes known) a treasure in gold coins, and he is able to bring his mother, Mary, and his childhood friend Emily to join him in New Zealand. Their reunion is delightfully dramatic; the ship bringing Mary and Emily is attacked by a Maori war party and the crew is about to be massacred, when a canoe appears:

The Maori voices had died down, as though they were in the presence of some great person.

Suddenly the crowd around the ladder opened, leaving a way clear onto the centre of the deck, lined on each side by the torch-bearers holding their flaming torches high above their heads. [...] Then, in a moment, there stood on the rail, high above the warriors, and lit dramatically by the crackling torches, a tall, lithe figure, his skin glowing golden brown, his eyes, unlike those of the other warriors, a clear piercing blue. His red hair, reaching to his neck, was bound by a woven flax circlet which held the tall white feather. A chieftain's feather cloak was fastened over one shoulder and he wore a flax kilt to his knees. His feet were bare. 'Honi! Honi!' shouted the warriors again.²³

Small wonder that his mother has 'the feeling of being in the presence of some character from history, like one of King Arthur's knights',²⁴ and that Emily blushes 'with a kind of hero-worship which she felt for this new handsome and powerful Johnny, the poor thin little "convict brat" who had become a kind of king.'²⁵

Johnny has already survived several treacherous attacks on him by the evil Tohunga and his jealous nephew; and he soon encounters another enemy in the person of the villainous Captain Lynch, who kidnaps Mary, Emily and Johnny and plans to return them to Hobart to claim a reward. However, they are rescued by Johnny's Maori friend Tareha, and take shelter with an eccentric Hungarian count who has

proclaimed himself king of the local area. Lynch is captured with the aid of a party of sailors from a British naval ship, and it transpires that the Commander of the ship is none other than Johnny's father, who has been searching for his wife ever since his discovery that Mary was falsely convicted of theft and transported to Hobart. Mary and her husband return to England, and Johnny promises to join them in two years' time when his tribe no longer needs him, and when Emily will be old enough to marry him.

Many aspects of the plot strain credulity: Johnny's adoption and complete acceptance by the Maori tribe; the way that he is able to instruct the Maori in agriculture and the use of muskets even though he is a young boy whose only previous experience has been living in a town and working in a flour mill; the fortuitous arrival of Johnny's father in time to rescue his son; and other instances too numerous to mention. The characterization is also rather contrived, with physical appearance denoting moral status; the 'good' characters are attractive, while the 'baddies' are ugly (the ship's captain, for example is 'a brutal looking man with a red face and pale bulging eyes'²⁶). The Maori characters are not developed at all, and only four are named – the old chief, Te Korokai; Johnny's friend Tareha; Te Huia, the chief of a neighbouring tribe; and the tohunga's treacherous nephew Te Wharenuui – and even they have no distinguishing characteristics, other than being 'good' or 'bad'. However, there are some interesting minor characters, notably the Hungarian Count and Countess Ananazy, with their delusions of grandeur, and the redoubtable Scottish Nanny who rules their household.

In spite of the attacks and abductions of the plot, the New Zealand depicted by the Mansons in *The Adventures of Johnny van Bart* is not nearly as violent as that of Tracy's *Lawless Days*. There are fewer deaths, and a comparatively small number of villains; even the escaped convicts are much more genteel and good-hearted. The Maori are also less ferocious. They tend to attack Pakeha or other tribes only if they have been deceived by evil men like the Tohunga or Captain Lynch, and Johnny is usually able to stop any conflicts before they get out of hand. The treatment of Maori is one of the weaknesses of the book, and betrays the authors' lack of knowledge on this subject. Johnny's four years living as a Maori are glossed over in one chapter,

and the reader gets no sense of what his life in the pa was like. The illustrator likewise avoids depicting Maori characters, and the few who are pictured do not have Maori features; for example, in the picture of a canoe expedition, Maori Tareha is virtually indistinguishable from his English companions.



Illustration by Ian Armour-Chelu for *The Adventures of Johnny van Bart* by Cecil and Cecelia Manson, p.141.

At the end of the book, news is received of the signing of the Treaty at Waitangi, which means that ‘the British Queen will see that we [the Maori] do not lose our lands to wicked traders’²⁷ and that the settler ‘will probably be better off as he will be able to call for help to the British Army or Navy if he finds himself in trouble’.²⁸ This is the only reference in the book to an actual historic event (although the shipboard flogging of the Maori chief Te Huia and the subsequent attack on the ship

by his tribe is probably based on the incident of Te Puhi and the burning of the *Boyd* in 1809; and Count Ananazy presumably represents the eccentric Frenchman, Baron Charles de Thierry, who proclaimed himself ‘sovereign chief of New Zealand’ during the 1830s). The authors’ intention is clearly to provide a good yarn rather than an authentic picture of 1830s New Zealand.

The reverse is true of Roderick Finlayson’s *The Springing Fern*, which was published in the same year (1965) as *The Adventures of Johnny van Bart*. The individual episodes of *The Springing Fern* originally appeared as Primary School Bulletins before being reissued in one volume, so the emphasis is on providing historical information in the guise of fiction; it is, as Hebley observes, ‘more “historical” than “novel”’.²⁹ The structure of the book is episodic, following the fortunes of one tribe (or more specifically the chiefly family of one tribe) from the 1820s to the 1930s, with a few paragraphs at the end bringing the story up to the time of writing. The first chapter briefly outlines how the early Maori adapted to life in New Zealand, and states that the story which follows is about how they adapt to the new challenge of the coming of the Pakeha. The author points out that, while the people and places in the story are imaginary, ‘the sort of thing that happens in the tale really did happen to many Maori people’.³⁰ The three chapters which follow – ‘The Coming of the Musket’, ‘The Coming of the Pakeha’, and ‘The Golden Years’ – describe the changes brought about to the traditional way of life of a north Waikato tribe: firstly by the acquisition of muskets which make inter-tribal warfare much more deadly; and secondly, by the impact of Pakeha traders, bringing guns and rum, and missionaries bringing a new religion. (Subsequent chapters which deal with the New Zealand wars and their aftermath will be discussed in Chapter Six.) Finlayson, though a Pakeha, lived among Maori, and was ‘devoted to strengthening the bonds between Maori and pakeha and in interpreting the Maori to the pakeha’.³¹ *The Springing Fern*, therefore, is narrated almost exclusively from the perspective of the Maori protagonists (in the first chapters mainly young Hira, the son of the chief) and gives a very different version of the early contact period from that of most other historical novels.

The novel imparts a great deal of information about Maori life, culture and values, and how these differ from the new customs introduced by the Pakeha. Much of this information is delivered by way of rather stilted discussions between the chief, Raukawa, and the tohunga Haunui (who is presented as wise and benevolent, rather than the evil witch doctor of most historical novels), as they debate the changes occurring around them. Other encounters are described from a child's point of view, such as Hira's first meeting with a Pakeha, whom he takes to be a patu-pai-arehe, or fairy, because of his pale skin. Hira is frightened by the stranger's queer bellowing voice, his strange coverings, his little pale blue eyes and his long red nose.³² Actual historical events (for example, the Treaty of Waitangi, which Raukawa refuses to sign, and the election of the Maori King) are presented as they impact on Hira's people.

Finlayson was possibly better known as the author of novels, novellas and short stories for adults (he was one of a group of writers termed the 'sons of Frank Sargeson'³³), and *The Springing Fern* shares many of the themes he explores in his adult writing, such as racial and cultural conflict, and the negative effects on Maori of their dispossession by the Pakeha. Lydia Wevers notes that 'Finlayson's stories do not sentimentalize the Maori, nor do they represent the Maori as less complex or ambiguous than the Pakeha', and that 'the narrative frames the Maori as individual but the Pakeha as institution or representative of an institution'.³⁴ This is also the case in *The Springing Fern*, where the Maori characters are individuals with names and personalities, while the Pakeha characters, even the more important ones, are referred to simply as 'the trader' and 'the missionary'. Despite its deficiencies as a novel (handicapped by the episodic construction and an emphasis on imparting information at the expense of narrative flow), *The Springing Fern* is significant as one of the few serious attempts to present an accurate account of New Zealand history from a viewpoint other than that of the Pakeha settlers.

Twenty years elapsed before the publication of another book set in the early contact period. Joanna Orwin's *The Guardian of the Land* (1985) uses the time-slip device to take two modern boys, Pakeha David and Maori Rua, back to the past to locate an ancient whale tooth pendant which represents the mana of the Kaikoura Maori.

Orwin states in her 'Author's Note' that the pendant really exists, and that according to local Maori tradition it was brought from Hawaiki by the first settlers and was regarded as the guardian of the area. In the book, Rua's grandmother is concerned that the pendant has been lost, and uses her mental powers to send the two boys to several significant periods in the past to try and locate it. They thus experience a seal hunt during the moa-hunter period, and then life in an early nineteenth-century Maori pa. The boys are entrusted with the task of taking the pendant to a place of safety when the pa is attacked by Te Rauparaha's warriors, but when they try to retrieve it in their own time, the pendant has gone. They are then sent back to a slightly later time when there was a shore-whaling station on the Kaikoura peninsula, where they take part in a thrilling whale hunt, and see the pendant being hidden in a whaler's hut. Back in their own time, the boys manage to arrange an archaeological dig at the site of the old town, and successfully retrieve the pendant, which they return to the local iwi. The historical events the boys have witnessed include the defeat of the Kaikoura Maori by Te Raupahara, and their humiliation at the hands of the whalers, but the return of the pendant and the building of a new marae at the end of the book symbolise the restoration of the tribe's land and mana.

As in her *Ihaka* books, Orwin has researched her subject thoroughly and manages to convey a great deal of information in the course of the story. However, details about such topics as the seal hunt, the daily life of the pa, whale hunting, and the society of the whaling station (not to mention the correct way to organise an archaeological dig) are incorporated into the narrative and do not slow the pace. The different strands of the narrative are also skilfully integrated, and parallels are drawn between the various time periods. For example, the unfair treatment of Maori by the whalers is compared with contemporary attitudes: David is initially reluctant to spend time with Rua because his parents do not approve of him associating with Maori, and his experience in the whaling village makes him realise that the prejudices of that time still exist. The overall theme, expressed by Rua's grandmother, is the need for Maori and Pakeha to co-operate, and this is exemplified by the growing friendship between David and Rua and the fact that they must work together to find the pendant. Orwin has based *The Guardian of the Land* on the history of the Kaikoura area, and she refers to real historical characters, such as Te Rauparaha and the Ngaitahu chief

Whakatau, and describes actual places, helping to balance the fantasy elements of the plot. As Hebley comments:

Orwin's skilful handling of details to describe the beach and seacoast gives her writing authority. [...] The sight, sound, smell, and feel of place and incident build up the reader's belief in the reality of the time-shifts that carry David and Rua between the present and the past.³⁵

The inclusion of a glossary of Maori words and a postscript with a brief explanation of the historical background of the story also add credibility.

Tarore's Book (1997) by Barbara Lambie also shows the author's familiarity with her source material (in this case the records of early Church of England missionaries, although this is not acknowledged in the text). However, Lambie lacks Orwin's skills of plotting and characterisation, and the narrative is earnest rather than engaging. The first section is a day-by-day (at times hour-by-hour) description of a journey undertaken in 1833 by Henry Williams and three other missionaries from the Paihia mission station to the pa of the Ngatihaua chief Waharoa at Matamata, in search of a place to establish another mission. The second section deals with the establishment of the mission station in Matamata several years later; the removal of the missionaries, Mr and Mrs Brown, to Tauranga when conflict breaks out between Ngatihaua and Arawa; and the death, in an Arawa raid, of Tarore, the young daughter of Waharoa's nephew, who has been taught to read by Mrs Brown. In the final section, Tarore's prized possession, a Maori version of the gospel of Luke, is instrumental in bringing about the conversion to Christianity of not only the Ngatihaua and Arawa leaders, but also Tamehana, the son of the dreaded Te Rauparaha. Tamehana is so moved by the message of Tarore's book that he asks for an English missionary to come to Otaki; and Octavius Hadfield, who answers the request, subsequently manages to dissuade Te Rauparaha from attacking Wellington. The final paragraphs of the book spell out the message in case readers have failed to see it for themselves:

Mr Hadfield had saved a city [sic] from disaster ... and how did he come to be there to do it? Well, Tamehana had come to the Bay of Islands, saying he wanted to learn more about the words of the book. How did Tamehana know about the book? Well, a man named Ripahau had come from Rotorua and taught him to read a little. He used to be a slave, so they said. He was a slave, and he could

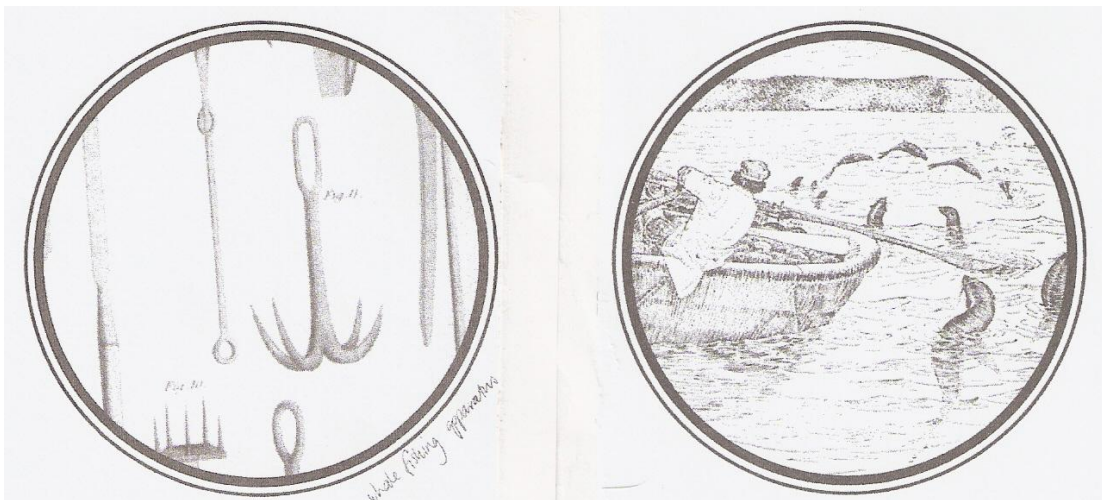
read? Yes – the missionaries had rescued him when his master was killed. When he went to Rotorua, he found a little book there – part of the trophy brought home by a war-party.

This book had belonged to a little girl, but she had been killed. And this little Maori girl could read? Yes, she had learnt at the Mission school in Tauranga. Her name was... Tarore ... yes ... Tarore. She had wanted one thing, a life of peace and love. It was a pity she had died. Yet now so many lived because she was faithful in little things.³⁶

Although the author occasionally attempts to give a child's perspective by having sections of the text focalized by Tarore, or by the Brown's young son, Marsh, the didactic element of the book predominates. This is reminiscent of the novels of the Victorian period which will be discussed in the following chapter.

While only nine historical novels about the early contact period appeared in the seventy-one years between 1928 and 1999, the first eight years of the new millennium have seen the publication of eight books set wholly or in part during that time. The first of these, *Call of the Cruins* (2000), is, according to the note by the author, Elizabeth Pulford, set in the Otago whaling station of Purakaunui. No date is given, but since both the father and older brother of the protagonist, twelve-year-old Emeline, are involved in sealing and whaling, the story is presumably set sometime between the establishment of Purakaunui station in 1837 and the decline of sealing which occurred by the end of that decade.³⁷ However, there is little attempt to establish the historical background, and no details of the sealing and whaling operations are given. Rather than the rough whaling stations described in other historical novels, Purakaunui station is unhistorically depicted as a settlement of comfortable cottages occupied by English families. The simple story revolves around Emeline's rescue of a wounded seal pup, and everything else, even the reported drowning of her father and one of her friends, is secondary to her attempts to nurse it back to health. Although the author professes to be 'fascinated by the pioneering days and the struggles people had to endure',³⁸ *Call of the Cruins* gives no real sense of the past, and events of the story could equally well have occurred in more recent times.

Seal Boy by Ken Catran was published in 2004, and is unusual in having an American rather than an English central character, though the fourteen-year-old protagonist fits into the tradition of the brave and resourceful British heroes of earlier books. Emmet, the spoilt son of a wealthy Boston family, is kidnapped and finds himself a reluctant crew member on a whaling ship bound for the southern oceans. In a plot device reminiscent of Kipling's *Captain's Courageous*, Emmet soon toughens up and is proud of becoming one of the ship's crew. However, he feels uneasy about the slaughter of the whales, a concern he shares with Patu, the Maori harpoonist. When the ship arrives in Kororareka, Emmet goes ashore to find a ship to take him back to Boston, but he is caught up in an attack on the town by the local Maori, and, in the confusion, he ends up on a sealing boat, the *Betsy Bright*, heading for the southern sealing islands. The unpleasant captain plans to kill Emmet to claim the reward offered by his grandfather for the return of the boy or his body. Emmet escapes on an inhospitable little island south of the Chathams, and like Dick and Barry in *Lawless Days*, he manages to survive the winter on his own, albeit with occasional help from the Moriori of a neighbouring island. He finds a family of seals and develops a strong bond with them, successfully protecting them from several other sealing expeditions. In the spring the *Betsy Bright* returns to look for Emmet and he is nearly captured, but, as in *The Adventures of Johnny van Bart*, a British Navy ship turns up in the nick of time and he is rescued. As a result of his ordeal, Emmet has matured physically and mentally, and become a committed (though rather anachronistic) environmentalist, determined to end the hunting of whales and seals.



Illustrations supplied by National Oceanic and Atmospheric Administration for *Seal Boy* by Ken Catran, p.65 and p.111.

Catran has researched the era thoroughly and produced a detailed backdrop for the story, reinforced by the numerous illustrations of ships and shipboard equipment, many with round frames as if glimpsed through a port hole. His descriptions of the arduous shipboard life, the dangerous process of catching whales and rendering their blubber, the ramshackle settlement of Kororareka, and the privations of life on a bleak and windswept island, all carry conviction. Less convincing is the way Emmet, only fourteen and until recently a pampered rich boy, manages to survive a winter alone on a desolate island with inadequate food, clothing or shelter, no fire for warmth or cooking, and suffering from fever after a blow to the head.

Fleur Beale's *A New Song in the Land; The Writings of Atapo, Paihia, c.1840* (2004), reconstructs life in a Maori community and on a mission station in the Bay of Islands during the 1830s from the perspective of Atapo, a young Maori woman. Atapo, captured by a rival tribe during the musket wars, takes refuge at the Williams' missionary station at Paihia when her life is threatened. She learns to read and write, adapts to unfamiliar Pakeha ways, and eventually becomes a Christian (though she has trouble understanding some of the biblical teachings and retains many of her traditional beliefs). The inevitable misunderstandings arising from the meeting of two different cultures are depicted: both the serious (a trader narrowly escaping death after unwittingly breaking a tapu); and the humorous (Atapo learning to use a chamber pot). The book covers the events leading up to the signing of the Treaty of Waitangi, and because this is such a pivotal event in New Zealand history, and one with which many readers would be familiar, Beale has undertaken considerable research and taken pains to depict the occasion as accurately as possible, albeit from the perspective of a Maori observer, rather than the more usual viewpoint of the Pakeha participants. Moreover, the publishers, Scholastic Press, had the text vetted by three academics prior to publication to ensure its accuracy.³⁹

The narrative is not weighed down by the wealth of historical detail, however, and Atapo's story moves briskly from its dramatic opening scene – the attack on her tribe which sees them defeated and enslaved – to the happy conclusion, when Atapo uses the knowledge she has gained from the Pakeha to help her people, and thus regains

her mana and the right to marry the man she loves. Beale paints an appealing picture of the lively young Maori women who live on the mission station; and in *Atapo* she has created a likeable heroine, whose intelligence, determination and love of learning are balanced by her sense of humour and love of fine clothes. The narrative is in the form of entries in *Atapo's* journal (a literary device which is effective, though historically implausible) and uses imagery drawn from her surroundings: 'I looked around, my eyes darting like the fantail. So much to look at! At my feet, the wide expanse of the sea shifted like a mat caught in the wind.'⁴⁰ By having *Atapo* as the first-person narrator, Beale is able to present a significant period in New Zealand history from the unusual perspective of someone young, female and Maori.

Four of the other books about the early contact era – *Hunter*, *Cross Tides*, *The Unknown Zone* and *Shadow of the Whale* – employ the device of dual time schemes, which juxtapose stories set in different time periods. (The use of binary narratives of this kind will be considered later in this chapter.) Joy Cowley's *Hunter* has two narrative strands, one set in 1805, the other in 2005 (although the book was actually published in 2004). The first narrative begins:

He was alive because he was a hunter. He had the gift, a way of seeing things that were hidden, the eel under a ledge in a stream, birds nesting in rushes or holes in the ground. If his captors killed him as they had killed other slaves, their storehouses would be leaner. He knew it. They knew it. But the knowing did not prevent them from treating him as one of the dogs.⁴¹

During the course of a moa hunt in a remote area of Fiordland, *Hunter* contrives to escape from his captors, and sets out to find the camp of the white sealers in the next sound, hoping that they will take him with them when they leave. Then he has visions of a fair-haired girl and two boys, and feels compelled to stay in the valley where he has seen them, even though he knows that he is being pursued by the tribe's young warriors and his life is in danger. In the second strand of the narrative, a plane crashes in the same remote valley two hundred years later, and fourteen-year-old Jordan and her two brothers, one of them badly injured, are the only survivors. *Hunter* can 'see' the children and can communicate with Jordan telepathically, and is thus able to ensure their survival by instructing her how to find food and shelter, and how to treat her injured brother. The contemporary story ends with the rescue of the

children, and Hunter, knowing they no longer need him, is able to leave and escape his pursuers. The link between Jordan and Hunter is explained in the last chapter, when it is revealed that the children are Hunter's descendants.

The mystical aspects of the plot are balanced by the reality of the landscape, and the concrete details which give a feeling of authenticity to both time periods. The isolated bay, with its stony beach, dense bush, persistent sand flies and torrential rain, is constant in both narratives; though to Hunter it is familiar territory, while to the children it is a hostile and dangerous environment. Cowley has taken pains to present the life of early nineteenth century Maori as accurately as possible, and unlike authors such as Tracy and the Mansons, she gives a real sense of Maori culture and society. She attempts to present things as they would have appeared to the Maori of the time:

Two summers past, something unexpected happened. Some huhu men came from another land. They settled beyond this valley, near the entrance of the next sound, where they killed and butchered seals. Hunter heard about them, men who had skins as white as the huhu grubs that burrowed in rotten logs, and who could kill at a distance with thunder spears. They were wasteful, these huhu men, throwing away good seal meat and taking the skins to their homeland on their giant waka hung with wind-catchers.⁴²

Cowley does not ignore the negative aspects of nineteenth century Maori society, such as intertribal warfare and the cruel treatment of captives and slaves, but the overall impression created by the book is of a culture living in harmony with nature, and with an understanding of, and respect for, the environment, which has since been lost. She uses the time-slip device to demonstrate that the loss of these values over time is regrettable, as it is only Hunter's passing on of traditional knowledge to the twenty-first century children that enables them to survive.

Lorraine Orman's *Cross Tides* (2004) also has a dual narrative in which the nineteenth century story explores the early interaction between Maori and Pakeha, but in this case the perspective is that of the newcomers rather than the Maori. The author's note at the end of the book acknowledges that the story is loosely based on the life of Betty Guard, who came to live at the shore whaling station on Arapawa Island in the Marlborough Sounds in 1829, as the sixteen-year-old wife of its owner, John Guard. However, unlike Betty Guard, who lived a fairly long and adventurous

life, Lizzie Dawson, the protagonist of *Cross Tides*, is desperately unhappy with both her uncouth husband and the rough life of the whaling station, and drowns herself after her husband brings about the death of the young Maori missionary with whom she has fallen in love. The main character of the modern narrative is also an unhappy sixteen-year-old girl, though her sufferings are less severe than Lizzie's; she is upset because her parents are divorcing and she has been sent to stay with relatives in the Sounds. When she visits the beach where the whaling station once stood, she 'sees' Lizzie, and hears the story of her ill-fated love for Matthew. As in *Hunter*, the characters can communicate across time because they are of the same family (Bel discovers that she is a descendant of Lizzie and Matthew), and because there is an important reason – for Hunter the need to ensure the children's survival, and for Lizzie the desire to have Matthew's body found so that he can be given a Christian burial.

Cross Tides opens with a prologue set in Sydney, told in the third person and describing how Lizzie was handed over to Jack Dawson by her stepfather to pay a gambling debt. The text then switches to the modern story, which is narrated in the present tense by Bel, and focuses on her relationships – with her parents; with the relatives she is staying with; and with the handsome young Maori land protestor she meets at Lizzie's beach. The reader enters Lizzie's time only indirectly, through the story she tells Bel, but the technique of first person narrative ensures close identification with Lizzie and her plight. The whaling station and its inhabitants, both Maori and Pakeha, are described from the perspective of a young Pakeha woman who is struggling to cope with the harsh conditions into which she has unwillingly been thrust. Orman has researched this era exhaustively and, although most of the characters are fictional, the historical background is accurate and fleshed out with authentic details. One incident, involving a confrontation between Jack Dawson and Te Rauparaha, is based on an actual event.⁴³

The Unknown Zone (2005) by Phil Smith has several separate narrative strands set in different time periods, none of them contemporary. One narrative begins in 1808, then jumps forward to the 1820s, while the other is set during the 1960s, then moves forward to 1975, with occasional flashbacks to earlier periods. Unlike *Hunter* and

Cross Tides, there is no contact between the characters of different periods, though connections emerge between the two stories. The first twelve chapters of *The Unknown Zone* alternate between the lives of Hemi Ratana in the 1960s and Rupert Revington in the 1800s. The stories are distinguished by different fonts, different points of view (Hemi's story is told in the third person, Rupert's in the first person), and different writing styles. Rupert, the youngest son of an Earl, is given an elegant and archaic style: 'Our sojourn on this ungodly coast had been fraught with tribulation of tempest foul and tempers raw'.⁴⁴ The language of Hemi's story, particularly the dialogue, is much less refined. 'Bloody orphan's been acting the goat as usual. [...] What do you reckon we ought to do with the bugger?'⁴⁵ 'That drunken bastard Sonny! Been to the rugby, had they! I bet they was as pissed as farts.'⁴⁶ 'Shit, it's the fucken cops.'⁴⁷ Smith tones down the language for the descriptive passages, though they are enlivened by original imagery: 'Baldy's gaze was as bleak as the Desert Road in August'⁴⁸; 'The driver, his face like a ferret in a henhouse, was just getting into his stride'⁴⁹; and 'The agile Ford ate up the bends like spaghetti'.⁵⁰

Rupert's narrative describes how he and his fellow sealers at Jackson Bay are captured by a ferocious Ngai Tahu war party, and most of them progressively slain and eaten by their captors. Rupert and one other survivor escape, and journey with the Ngati Wairangi tribe to join their allies, the Ngati Hei who live in the Kaimiro Valley on the Coromandel Peninsula. Rupert becomes a Pakeha Maori, marries the chief's daughter, and becomes a prosperous trader. However, in the last chapter of this narrative, Rupert's daughter, now an old woman, tells how after the death of Rupert's wife and the loss of the sacred greenstone pendant she was wearing, the Ngati Hei gradually lost their ancestral land through inter-tribal warfare, land sales, and government confiscation, and had to leave the Kaimiro Valley. The alternating chapters are set in the Kaimiro Valley in the 1960s. Hemi's great-grandfather purchased the valley in the late 1800s, and Hemi lives on the family farm, at first with his parents, then, after their death, with his bullying uncle, aunt and cousins. In the course of one eventful day, Hemi meets a beautiful girl called Rachel; finds the lost greenstone pendant while diving in the river; climbs a huge kauri tree where he finds his great-grandfather's body and takes a key from around its neck; discovers a cave where the Ngati Hei taonga have been hidden; and runs away from home. The final

eight chapters continue Hemi's story but move forward to 1975. The Kaimiro Valley is being destroyed by mining operations. Hemi, now a successful businessman, discovers that the key he retrieved ten years previously is for a safe deposit box, which turns out to hold the lost title deeds for the valley, as well as a fortune in gold. He evicts the mining company, and gives the Kaimiro Valley and the taonga back to the Ngati Hei. Rachel, who, it transpires, is a descendant of Rupert Revington, is the obvious recipient for the greenstone pendant, and, as in *The Guardian of the Land*, its return marks the restoration of the tribe's mana.

The plot of Hemi's story depends heavily on fortunate coincidences, and rather muddled Maori spirituality. The nineteenth century part of the narrative, on the other hand, is comparatively straightforward, and the descriptions of the attack on the sealers and the hazardous journey up the West Coast have a feeling of authenticity. However, the author does not let historical accuracy interfere with the necessities of the narrative; for example, when the plot requires a Maori interpreter, he invents a Catholic priest living with a West Coast tribe in 1808, thirty years before the arrival of the first Catholic missionary in New Zealand. Similarly, there is no evidence for the close connection Smith postulates between the Coromandel and West Coast tribes, and though the fate of the Ngati Hei is based on the account of their history in Michael King's *The Coromandel*, aspects of their story are fictionalized to further the plot.

Lizzie, love (2006) by Brenda Delamain, has similarities to *John and Hoani* and *A New Song in the Land*, in that it is set on one of the early mission stations in the Bay of Islands, in this case the Church Mission Society station at Kerikeri. The narrative encompasses actual happenings, such as the building of the Stone Store and a visit from the naturalist Charles Darwin, but there are no dramatic events such as the musket wars and the signing of the Treaty of Waitangi which feature in Beale's book. Rather, the story follows the domestic life of the Kemp family over a period of two years (1833 to 1835) as experienced by twelve-year-old Lizzie, the eldest daughter of missionary James Kemp. It is not a very happy time for the family. There is uncertainty about the future of the Kerikeri mission, and the Kemps face the possibility of having to leave their home and start afresh elsewhere. Mrs Kemp

suffers from depression after the birth of her eighth child, who soon dies from respiratory problems. Their conditions, and Lizzie's crippled leg, the result of a fever, would probably have been curable had appropriate medical treatment been available, but the lack of doctors was a fact of life for the early settlers, and Mr Kemp comments, "Considering our lack of medical help, we are remarkably fortunate".⁵¹ There are also pleasant occasions, however, such as the arrival of boxes from England with new clothes and shoes, and a Christmas party at Waimate for all the missionary families; and the story ends happily with Mrs Kemp's recovery, the return of the oldest son, Henry, from England, and the news that they can stay in Kerikeri.

Delamain based *Lizzie, love* on letters and journals of the 1830s, as well as the recollections of one of the Kemps' descendants; as she says in the Postscript, 'This is my imagined version of their lives, but based on as many facts and true incidents as I have been able to discover'.⁵² Her attention to detail is such that the story incorporates actual articles owned or used by the Kemps, such as the homemade Noah's ark still kept at Kemp House, and order lists held at the Stone Store. The feelings she ascribes to the characters also have a feeling of authenticity. For example, Henry is apprehensive about going to England because he has lived all his life in Kerikeri and has never seen a large building, a city, or a carriage, and he is afraid of being thought stupid. Lizzie's doubts about the existence of God when none of her prayers appear to be answered are also plausible. The small black and white illustrations by the author at the head of each chapter are reminiscent of those found in Victorian novels and help establish the period flavour.



Brenda Delamain, *Lizzie, love*, p.15, p.30 and p.93.

In the most recent novel of the early contact period, *Shadow of the Whale* (2007), thirteen-year-old David and his ten-year-old sister Emma are transported from their urban lives in 2007 to a shore whaling station on an unidentified part of the New

Zealand coast in 1838. The time-slip mechanism is not very convincing; David suffers a blow to the head in each time period which apparently triggers the time shift, but no explanation is given as to why Emma, who is not injured, also moves through time. The text emphasises the differences between the children's privileged twenty-first century lifestyle, and the primitive living conditions and the hard physical labour required for survival in the 1830s. David is expected to do a man's work as part of a whaling gang, and Emma is fully occupied helping her mother with housework, gardening, washing, gathering wood, and milking the cow. Their experiences are all described from the perspective of twenty-first century children; for example, David longs for Coca Cola to drink instead of water, and is horrified at having to sleep with his clothes on and wash in his father's used bath water. However, both David and Emma adjust very quickly to life in the 1830s, and when they return to their own time, after only three days, they bring their new work ethic and spirit of co-operation with them, to the astonishment of their parents. *Shadow of the Whale* has a similar setting to *Call of the Cruins*, but gives a more detailed and convincing insight into life on a shore whaling station, encompassing the catching and processing of whales as well as domestic arrangements.

The historical novels considered in this chapter thus give an insight into the lives of the first Europeans to come to New Zealand during the early contact period; not only whalers such as those who feature in *Shadow of the Whale*, but other Pakeha who were present in New Zealand prior to 1840 – sealers, convicts, missionaries, traders, and Pakeha Maori. The interaction of these groups with the indigenous Maori is arguably the most significant aspect of these books, but it has tended to be a fairly one-sided view. While all of the texts considered in the previous chapter on the pre-European period were necessarily focalized by indigenous characters, of the seventeen novels dealing with the early contact period, only six are focalized entirely or in part by Maori characters. This can probably be attributed to the fact that none of the authors is Maori:

When non-Indigenous authors construct Indigenous focalizers, they must imagine how these characters think, value, and feel, a highly complex task that demands a capacity to represent the other. It is not surprising, then, that non-Indigenous authors are more likely to construct non-Indigenous focalizers, since in this way

they are able to represent Indigenous cultures from the outside and from the perspective of majority cultures.⁵³

As discussed in the previous chapter, there is also a sensitivity about ‘cultural appropriation’ when non-Maori authors address Maori history. Scholastic Press refused to publish *A New Song in the Land*, which is told from the viewpoint of a young Maori woman, until (at the suggestion of the author’s agent), Maori historian Buddy Mikaere, who specialises in nineteenth century race relations and is a former Director of the Waitangi Tribunal, provided a foreword expressing approval.⁵⁴

I am very pleased that Fleur Beale has been brave enough to write ‘A New Song in the Land’ even though it may be criticised because it was not written by a Maori author.

I was invited to read the manuscript for that reason and immediately asked myself the question, “From what I know, how true is this story to the Maori people of the Bay of Islands of 1840 when the Treaty of Waitangi was presented to them for inspection and possible agreement?”

My conclusion is that in the context of that world and that time, the story rings true.⁵⁵

Beale is careful not to name the tribe to which Atapo belongs and is vague about its geographical location so that it cannot be identified with any actual iwi or hapu which might object to her use or interpretation of their history. Joy Cowley has a similar approach to using Maori material: ‘It is almost impossible to write Maori historical fiction. Such is the structure of Maori society [...] that as soon as a name is mentioned, a character can be historically placed in some part of Aotearoa New Zealand’.⁵⁶ In writing *Hunter*, therefore, she deliberately avoids identifying specific locations, tribes or characters, while trying to ‘remain true to Maori culture and the spirituality of the land’.⁵⁷ This attitude to Maori history is a comparatively recent development; for example, John Ewing, Roderick Findlayson and Joanna Orwin had no concerns about incorporating real places, tribes and historical Maori characters in their books published in the 1930s, 1960s and 1980s; although in the ‘Author’s Note’ to *The Guardian of the Land* Orwin says that the descendants of the Ngai Tahu chief, Whakatau, who is mentioned in the story, have read the manuscript and she thanks them for their support and interest.⁵⁸

The majority of the books in this chapter are focalized by Pakeha characters, with the result that the Pakeha perspective is seen as normative. This can be contentious: for example, where the first contact between the two races is told from the point of view of the Pakeha (as in *The Spaniards Came at Dawn*, *Lawless Days*, *Martin Thorn – Adventurer*, *John and Hoani*, *The Adventures of Johnny van Bart*, *Seal Boy*, *Cross Tides*, and *The Unknown Zone*), the initial impression of Maori tends to be a negative one. The European characters see Maori as terrifying savages – dark-skinned, semi-clothed, tattooed, and quite possibly cannibalistic. Johnny's first encounter with his future tribe in *The Adventures of Johnny van Bart* is typical:

From every side the dark half-naked bodies of Maori warriors appeared converging on them as they stood defenceless in the little open clearing. The Maoris, tattooed on faces and bodies, advanced, rolling their eyes from side to side, grimacing with lolling tongues, and going through the motion of hurling their spears, and making fierce, unintelligible noises.⁵⁹

Johnny and his companion are saved from the cooking fires only by Johnny's bravery, but the captured sealers in *The Unknown Zone* are not so lucky, and there are graphic descriptions of them being killed and eaten. This unfavourable first impression is generally modified as the Pakeha characters come to know the Maori better, although the attitude which replaces it is often based on the assertion of Pakeha superiority. Johnny rapidly gains ascendancy over 'his' tribe, who defer to him for leadership; and he teaches them Pakeha ways, such as using muskets, and growing crops, which are 'all cared for as carefully as any white man's would be'.⁶⁰ *The Adventures of Johnny van Bart* was published in 1965, but the underlying assumption that Pakeha are superior and that Maori are 'improved' by being taught Pakeha ways is still found in books written forty years later. In *The Unknown Zone*, Ngai Tahu, the Maori whom Rupert first encounters, are brutal cannibals, but the Ngati Wairangi and Ngati Hei, whom he subsequently meets, accept Rupert into their tribes, where he is soon playing a dominant role. Like Johnny he is instrumental in developing a lucrative trade with Pakeha ships, and he is made chief of the Ngati Wairangi on the death of the old chief.

In *Cross Tides*, Lizzie's negative first impression of Maori also subsequently changes; she is initially terrified by the 'eerie dark face covered with swirling dark

patterns', the dangling bone ear-pendant and the glinting eyeballs of the Maori crewman on Dawson's ship,⁶¹ but on the whaling station she befriends the Maori women who are the whalers' common-law wives. However, she feels superior to the 'native women' who remain 'every inch New Zealanders' despite their husbands' attempts to turn them into English housewives.⁶² Lizzie falls in love with a Maori, but Matthew is virtually a Pakeha. He has been rejected by his people and brought up by missionaries; he is a Christian, speaks English and is well educated, and does not look like a Maori – he has fine bones, 'the manners and the bearing of a worthy English gentleman', dresses in European clothes, and does not have any tattoos.⁶³ (This is in direct contrast to Fiona Kidman's adult historical novel, *The Captive Wife* [2005] also based on the life of Betty Guard, in which Betty falls in love with a Maori and adapts to his lifestyle rather than the reverse.⁶⁴) In the modern strand of *Cross Tides*, Bel's Maori boyfriend Daniel is also described in terms of his difference from his Maori companions. Unlike the other men, who have massive chests and shoulders, shaved heads and tattooed arms and faces, Daniel is smooth, lean and graceful, is 'unmarked by tattoos', and has long hair, and Bel likens him to 'the Native American Indians on TV'.⁶⁵ Obviously the situation identified by Bill Pearson in New Zealand literature between 1938 and 1965 – 'In almost all the romances any Maori candidate for marriage with a Pakeha is exceptional in having pale skin or delicate features or superior rank or education or some European ancestry'⁶⁶ – has not changed.

Another effect of privileging the Pakeha perspective through the use of non-Maori focalizers is to normalise the marginalization of Maori characters. The central characters in these texts are white (generally British), with a comparatively narrow range of minor character parts assigned to Maori. As noted in the previous chapter, one of these character types is that of the sage figure; either in the form of an evil tohunga, as in *Lawless Days*, *The Adventures of Johnny van Bart* and *Cross Tides*, or a wise kuia, as in *The Guardian of the Land* and *The Unknown Zone*. Maori characters in several other books also have mystical powers attributed to them; for example, Hunter has the gift of sight and the ability to communicate across time, and Patu, the Maori harpoonist in *Seal Boy*, can read Emmet's thoughts. Both Hunter and Patu also occupy another common character type, that of a Maori character who

befriends a white child, or children, and helps them to survive in an alien environment. Hunter uses his traditional knowledge to keep Jordan and her siblings alive; Patu rescues Emmett during a Maori attack on Kororareka; Wiki Tamatea saves David from drowning in *Shadow of the Whale*; in *The Spaniards Came at Dawn* Kura comes to the aid of Nick and Abel; Tupi saves the lives of Dick and Betsy several times in *Lawless Days*, and Tareha does the same for Johnny, Mary and Emily in *The Adventures of Johnny van Bart*. It is noticeable that the role of brave and resourceful native helper is confined to male characters. The few female Maori characters who appear are servants (*Lizzie, love*); sexual partners (*The Unknown Zone* and *Cross Tides*); or old women, either wise kuia (*The Guardian of the Land*) or harridans (*Lawless Days*).

Books with Maori focalizers offer a wider range of roles for Maori and give Maori characters greater agency than those with Pakeha focalizers. Rather than showing them simply as frightening savages or helpers of British protagonists, *Pitama*, *The Springing Fern* and the historical strand of *Hunter* depict Maori men and boys as brave warriors, skilful hunters and leaders of their people. Female Maori characters have fewer options; for example, although *A New Song in the Land* is told from the perspective of a Maori girl, and most of the main characters are female, the range of roles for Maori women is very similar to that of the books with non-Maori focalizers. Atapo and her family and friends are the captives and servants of the dominant tribe; the women, like Atapo's mother, are taken as sexual partners by their captors; and the older females are either wise and endowed with mystical powers, like Atapo's grandmother, or vindictive like the chief's wife, Uroko. When Atapo enters the Pakeha world, the choices available to her and the other Maori girls at the mission station are also limited to being servants (as the missionaries train them to be), or providing sexual favours to the sailors at Kororareka. However, at the end of the book, Atapo is given a different, and powerful, role when she uses her Pakeha education to expose the traders who are trying to cheat Maori into selling their land and is welcomed back into her tribe as a woman of learning who can mediate between the two races. She regains her mana and rangatira status, marries the young chief to whom she was betrothed in childhood, and looks forward to being the guiding star of her people. While Atapo is exceptional in being the only female Maori protagonist in

books on the early contact period, her chiefly status is shared by the male protagonists of several other historical novels with Maori focalizers. Pitama and the protagonists of *The Springing Fern* are the sons of chiefs; indeed Hunter is the only historical Maori focalizer who is not of chiefly rank, though his original status before he was captured is unknown, and his gift of seeing marks him as special.

Given that all of the historical novels about the early contact period are by non-Maori authors, it is not really surprising that the overall impression they convey is that the arrival of Europeans was beneficial for New Zealand and its indigenous inhabitants. A few books mention the negative effects, such as the devastation of the musket wars waged with European weapons (*Pitama*, *The Springing Fern* and *A New Song in the Land*), and the loss of Maori land and mana (*The Springing Fern*, *The Guardian of the Land* and *The Unknown Zone*). However, in most of these books the negative impact is balanced or outweighed by positive outcomes. For example, in *A New Song in the Land* Atapo regains her rightful status through the Treaty of Waitangi's abolition of slavery and her Pakeha education; and in *The Guardian of the Land* and *The Unknown Zone* co-operation between Maori and Pakeha leads to the restoration of land and mana. In other books, such as *The Adventures of Johnny van Bart* and *Tarore's Book*, the contact between Maori and European is overwhelmingly positive for Maori, who are happy to abandon their traditional way of life and learn (superior) Pakeha ways.

Pakeha-Maori like Johnny (and Rupert in *The Unknown Zone*) who teach European skills to their Maori tribes are presented in these books as having a positive impact, but other groups of Europeans with whom Maori came into contact prior to 1840, such as whalers and sealers, are often shown in a negative light. The shore whaling stations in *The Guardian of the Land* and *Cross Tides* are ugly, ramshackle places, reeking of rancid blubber, and inhabited by rough, uncouth and drunken men. The headmen of the stations (both called Jack) are violent men, who ill-treat the local Maori. This is closer to the historical record than the civilized settlements inhabited by English families in *Call of the Cruins* and *Shadow of the Whale*. The sealers in *Lawless Days* and *Seal Boy*, particularly the captains of the sealing ships, are equally brutal, and *Martin Thorn – Adventurer* features a fight between rival groups of

sealers. However, in *The Unknown Zone* the sealers are the victims rather than the perpetrators of violence, and in *Hunter* they give the local Maori useful tools and treat Hunter as an equal rather than a slave. The portrayal of traders also varies. Although most are seen as playing a useful role in providing Maori with essential goods, some are greedy or foolish, as in *A New Song in the Land* where the trader's ignorance of tapu nearly leads to his death. Only *The Springing Fern* seriously considers the long-term impact of the traders on the life of the tribe – the deleterious effects of not just muskets, rum and tobacco, but of the abandonment of traditional cultivation in order to grow flax for barter.

The Springing Fern is also the only book to question the role of the missionaries and the impact of Christianity on Maori life. Raukawa and his people are happy to embrace Christianity, but the ensuing loss of slave labour and the time spent building a church and school leads to a decline in food production and consequent hardship for the people. The tohunga laments the displacement of old beliefs and the chief's loss of mana. None of the other books in which missionaries feature share this concern, and they all have an unquestioned assumption that the missionaries are right to bring Christianity and (it is implied) a better way of life to Maori. Missionaries are depicted as exemplary characters, who undergo considerable adversity in order to bring salvation and civilization to New Zealand. This is especially so in *John and Hoani*, *Tarore's Book*, *A New Song in the Land* and *Lizzie, love* which are set on mission stations in the North Island, and, in the three latter books, feature historical missionary families. *Tarore's Book* depicts the missionaries, in particular the Brown family and Octavius Hadfield, as dedicated and courageous people, whose teaching of the gospel to Maori bears fruit in creating peace between tribes and preventing bloodshed. *A New Song in the Land* gives an overwhelmingly positive view of the Williams families, both in their relationship with the Maori, and their role in ensuring the signing of the Treaty of Waitangi. Reverend Henry Williams, his brother William, and their wives and children, are presented as admirable people who personify the Christian virtues they preach, and treat their Maori workers with respect. The Kemps and their missionary colleagues in *Lizzie, love* are also depicted as sincere and hardworking people, who do their best for the Maori among whom they live and try to protect them from the less scrupulous Pakeha who seek to exploit

them. One of the major achievements attributed to the missionaries in these books is the education of Maori, who are thereby empowered, not only by their literacy, but by the practical skills they have been taught. The example of Atapo has already been mentioned, and Matthew in *Cross Tides* has been taught carpentry and agriculture as well as reading and writing, which stands him in good stead on his travels.

In other books, mission stations provide useful refuges for adventurers. For Dick, Betsy and Tupi in *Lawless Days*, the Church Mission Society's mission in the Bay of Islands is the only oasis of safety in a wild and dangerous country, and when they finally manage to reach it after many adventures, Samuel Marsden takes them in and personally escorts them back to Sydney. The author's admiration for Marsden is clear, and she describes him as 'the great-hearted man by whose efforts the message of Christianity was taken to the Maoris'.⁶⁷ Johnny van Bart is cared for at the mission station of Mr Roberts and his wife (Ropata and Mata Ropata) when he is wounded, and later he brings Emily and his mother to live there. It is an outpost of British civilisation:

Johnny liked everything about the Mission Station; the pleasant, white-washed clay house, its pretty English garden, its neat gorse hedges, and its orchard where bees hummed in clouds round the thatched bee-hives. [...] It was a happy place to be in, and such a contrast to everything else Johnny had seen in the wild New Zealand of the 1830s.⁶⁸

The contrast between the 'pleasant', 'pretty', 'neat' and 'happy' mission station and Johnny's 'wild' life among the Maori is reinforced by the emphasis on whiteness: Johnny sleeps in a white room with white curtains, is cared for by 'a white woman with a gentle voice and blue eyes',⁶⁹ and is given white food (bread and milk) to eat.

The missionaries in these books are almost invariably Anglican, the only exceptions being the brave but anachronistic Catholic priest who makes a fleeting appearance in *The Unknown Zone*, and the French Catholic Bishop Pompallier, who impresses Atapo and her friends with his flashy purple dress, gold cross, and ruby ring, but is condemned by the other missionaries as an idolater. Bishop Pompallier is doubly suspect because of his race, as the perspective in most of the texts is resolutely British. In describing Pompallier, Beale is deliberately reproducing the attitudes of

the nineteenth century English missionaries, but *The Spaniards Came at Dawn* appears to reflect the actual values of the author, Ronald Syme, and the time of writing (the 1950s), rather than simply recording the seventeenth century enmity of England and Spain, judging by authorial comments such as this:

The history of Spain and Portugal reveals very clearly that the soldiers and explorers of both countries were usually incapable of making friends with, or even treating in a just manner, the native races with whom they were brought into contact.⁷⁰

The Spaniards are depicted as inferior in every way to the English sailors, who are better navigators, better fighters, and better at understanding the Maori and getting on with them. The Spanish are criticized for their arrogance and their cruel treatment of Maori and Indians, and their religion is ridiculed: ‘Spaniard after Spaniard went down, calling loudly and too late on the Catholic Saints to protect him from these bloodlusting savages.’⁷¹ The story ends with the comprehensive defeat of the Spaniards by the English and Maori allies.

The Adventures of Johnny van Bart, written in the 1960s, is also dismissive of races other than the British. The Hungarian Count Ananazy is depicted as foolish and deluded, setting himself up as king and issuing bombastic royal proclamations while being duped by an ex-convict who is stealing his timber. The Count and his wife are ruled by their Scottish Nanny who, as a British woman, is much more sensible and practical than the ineffectual Count and his ‘slightly bewildered’ wife: ‘What amazed, and amused, Johnny was to see the way in which Nanny treated the Count and Countess. She was never cheeky to them, yet she more or less told them what to do, and they meekly obeyed her.’⁷² When their house is attacked, Nanny and Johnny take charge, and Nanny is responsible for capturing the evil Captain Lynch by jumping on him from a tree and sitting on him until help arrives.

This pro-British bias is not unexpected, given that the majority of emigrants to New Zealand were British, and that many of the authors of these books were of British descent. As New Zealand society has become more culturally and ethnically diverse in recent years, some writers have attempted to reflect this cultural diversity through

sharing the focalization between characters of different ethnicities and/or different time periods. A similar strategy has been identified in Canada, whose colonial history has much in common with New Zealand. As noted in Chapter One, Canadian children's literature experts Perry Nodelman and Mavis Reimer observe that many Canadian novels for children written during the 1980s and 1990s use double narration and focalization, regularly alternating the character through whose eyes events are presented, presumably in response to Canada's status as a bilingual and multicultural society. A similar increase in awareness of the multicultural dimensions of New Zealand society has possibly contributed to the fact that dual narratives feature in five of the seventeen books about the early contact era; namely *The Guardian of the Land*, *Hunter*, *The Unknown Zone*, *Cross Tides* and *Shadow of the Whale*. The four latter were published between 2004 and 2007, which coincided with the publication of a number of other historical novels for children with binary narratives, such as Joanna Orwin's *Out of Tune* (2004) and *Tiggie Tompson All at Sea* (2002) by Tessa Duder, as well as the slightly earlier *Circles* by William Taylor (1996).

Orwin wrote the first of the dual narrative texts, *The Guardian of the Land*, in 1984. It has the most complicated structure of the pre-contact books, in that it juxtaposes three different time periods which David and Rua visit in their search for the whale tooth pendant – early Maori settlement, the 1830s, and the 1860s – with the present. The young Pakeha protagonist David thus gains an insight into the history and culture of the Kaikoura Maori, and this changes his perception of the Maori he meets in the present. When David goes back to pre-European times he takes the character of a Maori boy, Kura, while Rua remains himself in both time periods. However, David resumes his Pakeha persona when he returns to the present, and since he is the sole focalizer it is possible to argue that the point of view remains that of a twentieth-century Pakeha boy, especially since he does not identify with Maori when he is in his own time. Orwin is not so much concerned with effacing the differences between Maori and Pakeha as with stressing the necessity for co-operation between the two races.

In *Hunter* the historical narrative is focalized by the Maori slave, Hunter, and as there is no movement between the time periods Maori culture is not mediated through a

Pakeha perspective. Unlike David, the children in the modern strand of the story do not experience, or have direct contact with, the Maori past, so comparisons between the two times and cultures are implicit rather than overt. Readers, who have access to both narrative strands, realise that it is only Hunter's traditional knowledge that keeps Jordan and her brothers alive, even if the children themselves are unaware of this fact. Hunter's close affinity with the land is a marker of indigeneity which distinguishes him from Jordan, Robbie and Baxter (whose Maori blood has been diluted by generations of marriage with people of other ethnicities), and from Pakeha in general. Cowley's depiction of Maori spirituality could be seen as a New Zealand example of the 'Aboriginalism' identified by critics in Australian texts which celebrate the mysterious and timeless spirituality of Aboriginal culture as something fixed in the past and incompatible with modern life.⁷³ The contrast between the two time periods in *Hunter* makes it clear that the traditional Maori way of life and spiritual connection with the land have not survived into modern times; in fact, the arrival of the 'huhu men' is about to change it irrevocably. However, Cowley does not present the coming of the Pakeha in a completely negative light, as the presence of the sealers allows Hunter to escape from slavery; and his twenty-first century descendants are proud of being 'Ngati Bittsa': 'Maori – Ngati Porou and Arawa – as well as Swedish, English, Scottish, Irish, and German.'⁷⁴

The Unknown Zone does not attempt to give a Maori perspective of the past, as the historical strand of the narrative is presented from the point of view of English Rupert, and it is the 'modern' story, set during the 1960s and 1970s, that has a Maori focalizer. Hemi's story, a classic coming of age plot in which the protagonist overcomes many problems to achieve maturity, is the dominant narrative, occupying fourteen of the book's twenty chapters (including the first and last chapters, which, according to Mieke Bal, makes him the hero of the book⁷⁵). There are parallels between the two narratives, such as the romances between Rupert and Anatohia, and Hemi and Rachel, but one of the main functions of Rupert's story is to provide a historical background to significant events in Hemi's life. The ending of the book brings the two strands together in a symbolic act of reconciliation. The historical narrative begins with acts of aggression by Ngai Tahu that deprive Rupert's shipmates of their lives and the Ngati Wairangi people of their land, and the modern

narrative ends with the return of land and taonga to the Ngati Wairangi and Ngati Hei, many of whom are Rupert's descendants, by Hemi who is of Ngai Tahu descent. Like *The Guardian of the Land*, *The Unknown Zone* uses the dual time scheme to reveal the wrongs of the past, and to suggest that these can be compensated for by acts of goodwill in the present.

The other books with dual narratives, *Shadow of the Whale* and *Cross Tides*, do not give a voice to Maori in either time period. *Shadow of the Whale* is similar to many other time-slip books (including *Tides of Time* by Zana Bell which is discussed in Chapter Eight) in that time travel has both a didactic purpose, imparting information about the past through an overt comparison between the different time periods, and a psychological function whereby the protagonists' experiences in the past and interaction with people from another time help them to cope with problems they have in the present. David's brief experience of life on a whaling station changes him from a problem teenager, constantly arguing with his parents and harassing his younger sister, into an exemplary son and brother. He even redeems himself for having participated in a whale hunt while in the past by helping to rescue a stranded whale in the present.

Although *Cross Tides* has several major Maori characters in each narrative strand, the perspective remains that of the Pakeha narrators. Clare Bradford has pointed out that:

The potential advantage of binary narratives is that they are capable of producing a dialogue that interrogates the givens of both cultures by showing them to be constructed, relative, and contingent. However, such dialogue depends on the extent to which cultural and historical discourses are accorded alterity.⁷⁶

Bradford feels that *Cross Tides* fails in this respect, because 'its treatment of historical contexts is most clearly subsumed into the norms of contemporary Western culture'.⁷⁷ The schema of interracial romance (in both strands of the narrative), and of Bel's progress towards maturity, conform to Western narrative patterns; and Bradford describes Bel's discovery that she is descended from Lizzie and Matthew as 'a final strategy of incorporation': 'The Cherokee Princess effect, which claims spiritual connection and power through an imagined or remote biological connection with Indigeneity, is realised in this narrative twist, which draws otherness into a

normative Western selfhood'.⁷⁸ However, the choice of female focalizers for both narrative strands suggests that *Cross Tides* is primarily concerned with comparing the lives of the two female protagonists, Bel and Lizzie, and with the role of women generally. The unhappy and powerless women in the nineteenth century narrative – Lizzie, her mother and some of the Maori women at the whaling station, who are subject to their often abusive partners – are contrasted with those in the modern story, like Bel's mother, who is able to divorce her husband to enter into a new relationship, and Bel herself, who has freedom and opportunities undreamt of by Lizzie. Mere Ihaka, the sole Maori woman in the modern narrative, is also more powerful; she has psychic powers, and she is the leader of her people in their land rights protest.

Cross Tides' depiction of strong and liberated modern women is a reflection of the way attitudes to women and gender have changed over time. In the earlier books in this section, the protagonists are male, and females play only minor and largely passive roles. Betsy in *Lawless Days* and Emily and Mary in *The Adventures of Johnny van Bart* spend most of their time waiting to be rescued by brave and active males. Even Dinty, the independent young woman in *Martin Thorn – Adventurer*, who spends most of the book dressed as a boy and joins in various expeditions, has to be rescued by Martin and his shipmates when she is abducted by Maori. Dinty at first resists all suggestions from her would-be lover, Garry, that she should go to England and be educated, even though he assures her that, "“When I go home from my travels, if I find that you’ve been a good girl, I’ll marry you!””⁷⁹ Dinty retorts that she has enough learning: "“I can jabber in French and Spanish. I can sail a boat. I can do my trick at the ship’s helm. I can fire a pistol. I can swim. I can bully men.””⁸⁰ However, at the end of the book she sheds ‘the trappings of the boy’ and in her new guise as ‘the daintiest of maidens in the daintiest of girl’s garments’,⁸¹ she prepares to go to England, apparently reconciled to her future of education and marriage to Garry. The only female character in *The Spaniards Came at Dawn* is the Maori girl Teina and, in keeping with the values of the 1950s (when post-war attitudes dictated that women should stay at home), she is generally shown engaged in domestic duties, such as gathering and preparing food, making garments from flax, and drying the boys’ clothes. "“She will dry them by the oven of hot stones,” Kura said carelessly. “That is woman’s work. I told her to do it.””⁸² The only girl in *John and Hoani* is

also shown doing domestic work, in her case learning to sew. The first books in this section to have female protagonists – *Call of the Cruins*, *Hunter*, *Cross Tides*, and *A New Song in the Land* – have appeared since 2000, and the two latter, as already mentioned, accord their female characters more varied and effective roles. There are no females in the historical strand of *Hunter*, but in the modern story Jordan is portrayed as strong and capable, and she looks after the boys rather than expecting them to rescue her as in the earlier texts.

The most recent books, *Lizzie, love* and *Shadow of the Whale*, give a credible representation of the role of women during the 1830s. Lizzie's brothers go to school in Paihia (or, in the case of the eldest boy, Henry, in England), accompany their father on his mission trips, and go fishing; while Lizzie spends her time helping around the house, hemming handkerchiefs, minding her siblings, and assisting her mother in teaching the younger children at the missionary school. When she asks her father if she can come with him as interpreter on his missionary trips, he spells out her role in life:

If my work is God's work, then your mother's is too. I could not do mine without her. When I return to a clean house and clothing and food and happy, well-instructed children, I thank God for her. And it is God's work for you to be her comfort, just as she is mine.⁸³

Nevertheless, despite the restrictions placed on her by her gender, Lizzie is not presented as a passive victim, and she, her mother, and the other missionary women, lead full and active lives, and make a significant contribution to the work of the mission.

Shadow of the Whale also emphasises the hard work required by pioneer women in order to survive; as well as drawing attention to the changes which have occurred since the 1830s by comparing the rigidly defined gender roles of that time with those of 2007, when both David's parents have jobs outside the home and share the household tasks. David notices that the relationship between his parents in the two time periods is quite different:

Pa stopped and turned. "I am the man of this house," he said angrily, "and I will decide what my son does. Not you."

Ma frowned at him, but she didn't answer back. Davey had never heard his parents talking to one another like that.⁸⁴

David concludes that, unlike the situation in his modern life, in the 1830s 'Pa's word was law.'⁸⁵

As this chapter has indicated, historical novels for children give their readers a reasonably comprehensive view of the early contact period of New Zealand history, albeit mainly from the perspective of the Pakeha newcomers rather than the indigenous Maori population. While the initial exploration period, which would seem to offer a fascinating field for fictionalised history, has been the topic of only one rather fanciful novel, the early part of the nineteenth century prior to the signing of the Treaty of Waitangi has been used as the setting for books ranging from adventure stories with little claim to historical authenticity to serious attempts to present actual historical people and events as faithfully as possible. Several of the earlier books such as *The Spaniards Came at Dawn*, *Lawless Days*, and the *The Adventures of Johnny van Bart*, as well as the more recent *Seal Boy*, depict New Zealand as a dangerous place where the protagonists narrowly survive their encounters with the wild terrain and even wilder inhabitants, and are pleased to go 'home' to their own more civilised countries. In *Cross Tides* the only way of escape is through suicide, but the English protagonist of *The Unknown Zone* chooses to stay and become assimilated with the Maori; in both cases, however, their descendants successfully integrate into modern New Zealand society. *John and Hoani*, *Tarore's Book* and *Lizzie, love* give positive accounts of one of the few groups who deliberately chose to come to New Zealand during this time – the missionaries, who are presented in nearly all of these texts as the only Pakeha to have an unequivocally beneficial effect on Maori. The Maori point of view is presented in *Pitama*, *The Springing Fern*, *The Guardian of the Land*, *Hunter* and *A New Song in the Land*; although *The Springing Fern* is the only text to express serious reservations about the impact of the Pakeha on the Maori way of life.

Overall, the early contact period is seen as a time of excitement and change for both Maori and the Pakeha newcomers. After 1840, New Zealand experienced a wave of

immigration, mainly from Britain, and historical novels dealing with this immigration form the subject of the following two chapters.

¹ Mona Tracy, *Lawless Days: A Tale of Adventure in Old New Zealand and the South Seas* (Auckland: Whitcombe & Tombs, 1928), p.250.

² King, p.91.

³ I have not included these books as New Zealand historical fiction, as they are not by New Zealand authors, and they are not primarily concerned with the exploration of New Zealand, but rather with Cook's expeditions as a whole. New Zealand author Bill O'Brien is writing a historical novel about the voyage of the *Endeavour* for the 'My Story' series, in the form of Nicholas Young's diary.

⁴ This New Zealand connection presumably qualifies Syme for inclusion in Gilderdale's *A Sea Change*.

⁵ Ronald Syme, *The Spaniards Came at Dawn* (London: Hodder & Stoughton, 1959), p.5.

⁶ The more usual version of this is 'Ngai Tahu', but when discussing individual texts I retain the form used in that text.

⁷ Syme, *The Spaniards Came at Dawn*, p.75.

⁸ Syme, *The Spaniards Came at Dawn*, p.45.

⁹ Elsie Locke, 'Children's Historical Fiction in New Zealand', *Historical News* 32 (1976), 7-10, 16 (p.9).

¹⁰ Tracy, *Lawless Days*, p.250.

¹¹ Tracy, *Lawless Days*, p.215.

¹² Tracy, *Lawless Days*, p.105.

¹³ Mona Tracy, *Martin Thorn – Adventurer* (Auckland: Whitcombe & Tombs, 1930), p.53.

¹⁴ Tracy, *Martin Thorn – Adventurer*, p.183.

¹⁵ Tracy, *Martin Thorn – Adventurer*, p.193.

¹⁶ Tracy, *Martin Thorn – Adventurer*, p.177.

¹⁷ As described in Harry C. Evison, *Te Wai Pounamu: The Greenstone Island: A History of the Southern Maori during the European Colonization of New Zealand* (Christchurch: Aoraki Press, 1993), pp.60-70.

¹⁸ Evison, p.61.

¹⁹ Valerie Grayland, *John and Hoani* (London: Blackie, 1962), p.38.

²⁰ Grayland, p.49.

²¹ In Fleur Beale's *A New Song in the Land* one of the ships which calls at Kororareka is also called the *Currency Lass*.

²² Trevor Bentley's *Pakeha Maori* refers to six Europeans who became 'rangatira Pakeha' or white chiefs. One of these, James Caddell, who was captured by Ngai Tahu at the age of thirteen and subsequently achieved chiefly status through his fighting abilities and marriage to a chief's niece, may have been the inspiration for the Mansons' story. Caddell, however, became completely assimilated into Maori society and did not return to European life.

²³ Cecil and Celia Manson, *The Adventures of Johnny van Bart* (London: Epworth Press, 1965), p.116.

²⁴ Manson, *The Adventures of Johnny van Bart*, p.134.

²⁵ Manson, *The Adventures of Johnny van Bart*, p.133.

²⁶ Manson, *The Adventures of Johnny van Bart*, p.145.

²⁷ Manson, *The Adventures of Johnny van Bart*, p.188.

²⁸ Manson, *The Adventures of Johnny van Bart*, p.180.

²⁹ Diane Hebley, *Off the Shelf: Twenty-one Years of New Zealand Books for Children* (Auckland: Methuen, 1980), p.90.

³⁰ Roderick Finlayson, *The Springing Fern* (Christchurch: Whitcombe & Tombs, 1965), p.3.

³¹ Finlayson, endpapers.

³² Finlayson, p.32.

³³ Lydia Wevers, 'The Short Story', in *The Oxford History of New Zealand Literature in English*, ed. by Terry Sturm, 2nd edn., (Auckland: Oxford University Press, 1998), pp.245-320 (p.270).

³⁴ Wevers, p. 275 and p.276.

³⁵ Hebley, *The Power of Place*, p.61.

³⁶ Barbara Letitia Lambie, *Tarore's Book*, illus. by P. G. Rob [Robyn MacIntosh-Handtschoewercker] (Christchurch: Trinity Publishing, 1997), pp.87-88.

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- ³⁷ Malcolm McKinnon, ed. *New Zealand Historical Atlas* (Auckland: David Bateman, 1997), p.29a; Geoffrey W. Rice, ed. *Oxford History of New Zealand*, 2nd edn., (Auckland: Oxford University Press, 1992), p.33.
- ³⁸ Elizabeth Pulford, *Call of the Cruins* (Auckland: Scholastic, 2000), p.110.
- ³⁹ Discussion with Fleur Beale, 12 September 2008.
- ⁴⁰ Fleur Beale, *A New Song in the Land: The Writings of Atapo, Paihia, c.1840* (Auckland: Scholastic, 2004), p.63.
- ⁴¹ Joy Cowley, *Hunter* (Auckland: Puffin, 2004), p.7.
- ⁴² Cowley, p.13.
- ⁴³ Lorraine Orman, *Cross Tides* (Dunedin: Longacre Press, 2004), p.227.
- ⁴⁴ Phil Smith, *The Unknown Zone* (Auckland: Random House, 2005), p.19.
- ⁴⁵ Smith, p.15.
- ⁴⁶ Smith, p.16.
- ⁴⁷ Smith, p.74.
- ⁴⁸ Smith, p.17.
- ⁴⁹ Smith, p.75.
- ⁵⁰ Smith, p.104.
- ⁵¹ Brenda Delamain, *Lizzie, love* (Dunedin: Longacre, 2006), p.12.
- ⁵² Delamain, p.128.
- ⁵³ Bradford, *Unsettling Narratives*, p.73.
- ⁵⁴ Discussion with Fleur Beale, 12 September 2008.
- ⁵⁵ Beale, *A New Song in the Land*, p.4.
- ⁵⁶ Cowley, *Hunter*, p.149.
- ⁵⁷ Cowley, *Hunter*, p.149.
- ⁵⁸ Orwin, *The Guardian of the Land*, p.156.
- ⁵⁹ Manson, *The Adventures of Johnny van Bart*, p.53.
- ⁶⁰ Manson, *The Adventures of Johnny van Bart*, p.132.
- ⁶¹ Orman, *Cross Tides*, p.13.
- ⁶² Orman, *Cross Tides*, p.90.
- ⁶³ Orman, *Cross Tides*, p.90.
- ⁶⁴ Kidman's novel follows more closely historical accounts of Betty Guard's life; for example, that in *Captured by Maori: White Female Captives, Sex and Racism on the Nineteenth Century New Zealand Frontier* by Trevor Bentley (2004).
- ⁶⁵ Orman, *Cross Tides*, p.78.
- ⁶⁶ Bill Pearson, 'The Maori and Literature 1938-65', in *Essays on New Zealand Literature* ed. by Wystan Curnow (Auckland: Heinemann, 1973), pp.99-138 (p.107).
- ⁶⁷ Tracy, *Lawless Days*, p.60.
- ⁶⁸ Manson, *The Adventures of Johnny van Bart*, p.79.
- ⁶⁹ Manson, *The Adventures of Johnny van Bart*, p.77.
- ⁷⁰ Syme, *The Spaniards Came at Dawn*, p.51.
- ⁷¹ Syme, *The Spaniards Came at Dawn*, p.85.
- ⁷² Manson, *The Adventures of Johnny van Bart*, p.173.
- ⁷³ Bradford, 'Saved by the Word', p.101.
- ⁷⁴ Cowley, *Hunter*, p.18.
- ⁷⁵ Mieke Bal, *Introduction to the Theory of Narrative* (Toronto: University of Toronto Press, 1985), p.105.
- ⁷⁶ Bradford, *Unsettling Narratives*, p.114.
- ⁷⁷ Bradford, *Unsettling Narratives*, p.114.
- ⁷⁸ Bradford, *Unsettling Narratives*, p.115.
- ⁷⁹ Tracy, *Martin Thorn – Adventurer*, p.173-174.
- ⁸⁰ Tracy, *Martin Thorn – Adventurer*, p.173.
- ⁸¹ Tracy, *Martin Thorn – Adventurer*, p.278.
- ⁸² Syme, *The Spaniards Came at Dawn*, p.90.
- ⁸³ Delamain, p.29.
- ⁸⁴ Celia Davies, *Shadow of the Whale* (Auckland: Reed, 2007), p.69.
- ⁸⁵ Davies, p.87.

CHAPTER FOUR

IMPERIALISM, EVANGELIZATION AND ANTIPODEAN ADVENTURES:

IMMIGRANT NOVELS BY VICTORIAN AND EARLY TWENTIETH

CENTURY WRITERS

The country was called the England of the south, and thought one of the best countries in the world, besides being large enough to hold both the original natives and their English brothers, who wished to teach them to live as comfortably as themselves.¹

Immigration was one of the most significant factors in the history of New Zealand during the mid-nineteenth century. In the fifty years between 1831 and 1881 the Pakeha population of New Zealand increased by a staggering 50,000 percent. At the time of the signing of the Treaty of Waitangi in 1840 there were a little over 2,000 Pakeha settlers, but a mere eighteen years later the number had risen to 59,000, and the Maori population (at that time around 56,000 people) had been outnumbered by Pakeha. By 1881 the Pakeha population had grown to 500,000, boosted not only by births, but by a massive influx of settlers. The settlement of New Zealand was, as Michael King points out:

a subplot in the diaspora of Europeans that sent as many as 50 million people from the Old World to the New over a period of 200 years. These were the settlers who created neo-Europes in North America, Australia and southern Africa, taking with them the flora, fauna, agricultural and horticultural practices of the places they had left behind.²

Immigrants, many of them the victims of poverty, religious intolerance and the inequities of the class system, were motivated by the desire to make new lives for themselves in a healthy, egalitarian environment which promised opportunities for social and financial advancement. Private immigration schemes, such as those of Edward Gibbon Wakefield's New Zealand Company, were responsible for the arrival of many settlers in the 1840s, and these were augmented during the 1850s by schemes set up by provincial governments to attract new settlers to their particular regions. The 1860s saw a further influx of immigrants from two very different causes: firstly, gold seekers enticed by the discovery of gold in Otago, the West Coast of the South Island and the Coromandel peninsula; and, secondly, military settlers brought in from Australia and Britain to protect colonists during the New Zealand

wars. The 1870s and 1880s saw the arrival of an even larger number of settlers, as the result of central government campaigns devised by the Colonial Treasurer (later Premier) Julius Vogel.

The majority of these settlers were British: approximately 50 percent came from England and Wales, 24 percent from Scotland and 19 percent from Ireland. Immigrants of non-British descent (Germans, Scandinavians, Poles, French, Italians and Chinese) made up fewer than ten percent of the settlers, so it was hardly surprising that New Zealand ‘became in some respects “more British” than Britain itself’.³ English language, culture and religion dominated, and those who did not conform, namely Maori and non-English immigrants, particularly Irish Catholics, were marginalized. Most settlers embraced life in the new colony and established themselves with varying degrees of success, but, for many, colonial life did not live up to expectations. Of the 400,000 immigrants who had arrived by 1881, a quarter chose not to stay in New Zealand.

The migration of millions of Europeans to ‘neo-Europes’ in other parts of the globe during the nineteenth century was justified by invoking the idea of ‘historical destiny’, as Seamus Deane explains:

The European success was not exclusively biological or ecological. It was achieved over nature, but a nature inhabited by peoples whose defeat, expropriation, enslavement, or extermination had to be justified in a series of theoretical formulations that relied on categories paraded as fundamental and universal. Among these were the categories of history and of race. In the nineteenth century, the period in which European imperialism attained its fullest expansion, geographically and ideologically, a Hegelian philosophy of history was invoked to demonstrate that the task of completing human history had been passed on to the European nations. All others had fulfilled their historical destiny and now belonged to the past. Present and future were the temporal territories of white Europeans. This version of historical destiny was blended with later neo-Darwinian concepts of evolution in a mutually reinforcing alliance. History as a concept was enfolded with race; racial evolution and historical destiny were envisaged as ineluctable forces that marched together in the name of Progress toward the triumph of “civilisation”.⁴

Children’s books written during this time were inevitably imbued with this concept of ‘historical destiny’, and could, in fact, be seen as part of the colonizing process:

To disguise its essentially rapacious nature, colonialism has been represented in literary, historical and political discourses as a species of adventure tale, dominated by an ethic of personal heroism that is embedded in a specific national-religious formation.⁵

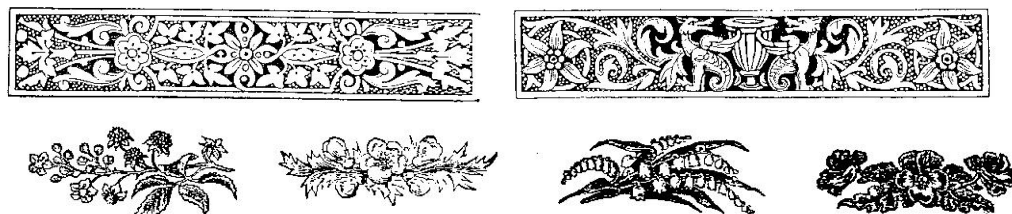
Between 1862 and 1916 a number of such ‘adventure tales’ appeared in the guise of stories for children which presented the process of colonizing New Zealand within the ‘specific national-religious formation’ of British Protestantism. These texts, with their combination of imperialism, evangelization and antipodean adventures, have much in common with books set in other parts of the Empire such as Africa, Canada, and Australia. The similarities between nineteenth century Australian and New Zealand children’s books, in particular, were noted in Chapter One. However, the eleven children’s books about immigration to New Zealand considered in this chapter (nine published during the reign of Queen Victoria [1837-1901] and two novels published in the early years of the twentieth century) form a unique and distinctive body of work shaped by their response to the New Zealand landscape and its indigenous inhabitants.

These books were published during, or shortly after, the pioneering period in which they were set. Gilderdale is of the opinion that:

As such they were perhaps less novels in the strictest sense of the term, than explosive impressions of a new land. Nothing in the settlers’ previous experience had been so strange as the confrontation, not only with a different race, but with an untamed countryside of inhospitable mountains, impenetrable forests, and active volcanoes which might vent their anger in eruptions or shrug their indifference in earthquakes. There was a great deal to tell, and the settlers told it with a vengeance.⁶

It was not the actual settlers, however, who told these stories; there is little biographical material available on the authors of these books, but it seems likely that all of them lived in the United Kingdom, or more specifically England.⁷ These writers saw Britain’s most far-flung colony as an exotic location in which their characters could have exciting adventures; although, as neither they, nor the illustrators of these books, had ever visited New Zealand, their representations of the country and its inhabitants were not always particularly authentic. These authors

were, as Bradford has noted in the Australian context, ‘innocent of any first-hand experience of the country, relying on other works of fiction, travellers’ tales and popular science for the local colour they interpolated into their narratives.’⁸ The British focus of the texts is mirrored in the illustrations, in which the New Zealand landscape is often pictured as resembling British scenery. The decorative floral designs found at the beginning and end of chapters in many of the novels of the Victorian period are invariably of English flowers and incorporate European motifs.



Chapter headings and tailpieces from *The Redfords* by Mrs George Cupples (illustrator unknown).

The first New Zealand settler novel, *Distant Homes; or The Graham Family in New Zealand* (1862), was based on letters received by the author, Mrs J. E. Aylmer, from a relative who had settled in New Zealand. The letters clearly did not convey a sense of this country’s geography; the book describes how passengers on a ship in Cook Strait watch the eruption of Mount Egmont (although the volcano had at that time been dormant for over two hundred years), with accompanying earthquakes, violent thunder storms, water spouts, and a tidal wave; and has several of the characters cutting their way through a kauri forest (found only in the northern part of the North Island) on their way overland from Nelson to Christchurch. Nevertheless, the book, which is set during the period 1858 to 1861, provides an intriguing account of the Graham family’s experiences in establishing a farm in Canterbury. Their motive in moving to New Zealand is financial, as Mrs Graham has lost her money in a bank collapse and is disappointed in an expected inheritance (there is no mention of her husband’s income). However, they can still afford to bring their servant Bridget with them and employ workers on their farm; and a large area of land is bought, a house is built, and the land is transformed into a productive farm with comparative ease. Within three years they have also built a school and a church, and employed a gardener to tend their roses. The local Maori are so impressed with the newcomers that they build a pa nearby so that they can be near their ‘English brothers’, to the

delight of young Lucy and Beatrice, who welcome the chance to teach the ‘poor ignorant natives’.⁹ When war breaks out between Maori and settlers in Taranaki, Captain Graham is able to persuade the local tribe not to join the insurrection.



Captain Graham addressing the Natives

Frontispiece by J. Jackson for *Distant Homes* by Mrs J. E. Aylmer

Distant Homes was written for a British audience and, as Kirstine Moffat observes, is shaped by two seemingly conflicting purposes, aiming to be both a tale of adventure in an exotic locale, and a didactic work which instils in the reader the author's moralistic outlook, Anglican beliefs and patriotic sensibilities.¹⁰ This is mirrored by the two narrative voices of the novel. When Aylmer writes from the point of view of tomboyish Lucy, who regards the voyage to New Zealand as an adventure, she captures some of the excitement of a child's response to a new environment:

Floods occurred frequently that winter, as it happened to be an unusually wet season; and yet, although the rain fell every day, there was always a clear hour or two in the middle of the day, when they could get out; and it was well worth

risking wet feet to breathe the fresh invigorating breath of the shrubs and flowers, all glittering and sparkling, as they were, with the raindrops; while, if you ventured into the forest, every step brought down a shower-bath on your head. Lucy never came in from a walk in winter without traces of the rain-diamonds sparkling among her curls, and often wet through and through, though no bad effect ever seemed to arise from such experiments, or, as some people would call them, imprudences.¹¹

More often, however, the voice is that of the author, who addresses the reader directly to instruct and preach; and, just as rebellious Lucy is tamed into a decorous young lady by the end of the book, so too the voice of the child is subsumed by the moralising of the adult. In the same way, the New Zealand setting, which tantalizes with the possibilities of exotic difference, serves merely as backdrop for a lesson in British Victorian values.

Despite (or because of?) this, the book, as Ringer observes, ‘established a minor literary type, the New Zealand emigrant novel.’¹² *Distant Homes*, in fact, provided a template for many of the books which followed. The plot, which reappears with minor variations in seven of the eleven books discussed in this chapter, can be summarised as follows: a middle-class English family who have lost their wealth due to bank failures and/or the loss of a parent or an expected inheritance come to New Zealand where they buy land and rapidly establish a flourishing farm on the English pattern, generally with the aid of servants who have accompanied them from England. In the process, they have a number of adventures arising from their interaction with the New Zealand landscape and the Maori inhabitants, both of which are presented as alien and potentially dangerous. These adventures include treks through the bush, floods, the near drowning of one or more of the characters, a visit to a Maori pa, and encounters with hostile Maori. All of the books refer to actual historical events, such as the New Zealand wars (generally the Taranaki campaigns), and several feature episodes in which possible Maori hostility is averted by the intervention of the father of the settler family. Other elements of *Distant Homes* which reappear virtually unchanged in subsequent texts include colourful descriptions of native life and customs, such as the huge appetites of the Maori and their habit of weeping and wailing whenever they meet (which Mrs Aylmer and other Victorian writers call a tangi), and negative impressions of Maori ‘huts’ decorated with ‘ugly

and disgusting idols' and 'all alike full of smoke, dried fish and dirty rush mats'.¹³ The imperial, evangelistic and moral tendencies of *Distant Homes* also feature strongly in succeeding novels, and these aspects will be discussed later in this chapter.

Holmwood; or, the New Zealand Settler (1869) by William Henry Giles Kingston was issued by the same publisher as *Distant Homes*, and Kingston's debt to Aylmer is obvious. Both books were illustrated by J. Jackson, so the illustrations are also very similar. Kingston was both a popular and prolific author of adventure stories and a staunch advocate of emigration, which he saw as a means by which England could divest itself of excess population. It was not surprising then, that among the 171 books he wrote during his forty-two year writing career were an emigrant manual and two novels about emigration to New Zealand. These were intended not just for children, but for adults as well; *Holmwood* was published as part of a series called *Taking Tales*, which 'will be found suitable for the poorer population of our towns, the inhabitants of our coasts, and our soldiers and sailors in barracks and on board ship; also for reading in night schools'.¹⁴ The story has some basis in fact, and Ringer notes that long descriptive passages were lifted from Charles Hursthouse's *An Account of the Settlement of New Plymouth*.¹⁵ As well as accounts of New Zealand geography and history, there are passages clearly aimed at prospective emigrants, giving information on vegetation, soil structure, and methods and costs involved in breaking in the land:

He calculated that it cost him from between two to three pounds to clear an acre of fernland, and upwards of five pounds to get the seed into an acre of bush land. It must be remembered that New Zealand is on the other side of the globe to England and that when it is summer in England it is winter there.'¹⁶

The Parry family – the Major, his wife, five children and five servants – who settle near New Plymouth after the Major loses his fortune in a bank failure, demonstrate the attitude Kingston thinks is necessary for emigrants: 'If a family with small means in a new colony wishes to succeed, every member of it must work; and Mrs Parry, anxious to set a good example to her children and her servants, was in the habit of working harder than anybody.'¹⁷ With this work ethic, the Parrys soon establish a

successful farm, with help from the local Maori, whose chief, Toi Korro, is well-disposed towards the settlers because of their care for his sick daughter, Yeda. When Maori in another part of the country rebel, Major Parry is successful in persuading the local tribes to be loyal to Britain; with the exception of the war-like chief Moodewhy and his son Matangee. Matangee kidnaps the Parrys' daughter, Emily, and their servant girl, Jane; but Yeda, with the aid of a young Christian Maori, Amoco, helps them to escape. War is averted, Yeda marries Amoco, and the Parry family resume their peaceful and profitable life: '[Though] many of the other settlers left their farms and went over to Nelson or quitted the country, the Major with the help of Allan, Peter and Tim Grogan held his own and is now one of the most successful settlers in that part of New Zealand.'¹⁸



Illustration by J. Jackson for *Holmwood* by W. H. G. Kingston, p.38.

The plot of Kingston's *Waihoura, or The New Zealand Girl* (1873) is almost identical to that of *Holmwood*. Mr Pemberton, having lost both his wife and his fortune, emigrates to New Zealand with his sons Valentine and Harry and daughter Lucy, 'a fair sweet-looking girl of about fifteen'.¹⁹ They are accompanied by Lucy's maid Betsy, and by farmer Greening and his wife and three sturdy sons. The Pembertons and Greenings rapidly establish flourishing farms and recreate an English pastoral landscape:

The appearance of Riverside had greatly improved since Mr Pemberton and farmer Greening had settled there. They had each thirty or forty acres under cultivation, with kitchen gardens and orchards, and Lucy had a very pretty flower garden in front of the cottage, with a dairy and poultry yard, and several litters of pigs. Harry's flock of sheep had increased threefold, and might now be seen dotting the plain as they fed on the rich grasses which had sprung up where the fern had been burnt. There were several other farms in the neighbourhood, and at the foot of the hill a village, consisting of a dozen or more houses, had been built.²⁰

However, Kingston is concerned less with the 'improvement' of the New Zealand landscape by replacing it with an English model, and more with improvement of the New Zealand natives by replacing their ignorance and savagery with Christianity. Much of the story revolves around Lucy's friendship with Waihoura, a chief's daughter whom she nurses back to health after an unspecified illness. Lucy feels it is her duty to teach Waihoura about God, which she does at length, in dissertations often several pages long. So successful are her efforts that when Waihoura has to return to her people she is distraught:

"Till I came here I did not know what it was to love God, and to try and be good, and live as you do, so happy and peaceable, and now I must go back and be again the wild Maori girl I was before I came to you, and follow the habits of my people."²¹

Lucy, Harry and Betsy are kidnapped by the rebel chief Hemipo, and rescued by Waihoura, with the assistance of Rahana, 'a fine young man, one of the handsomest natives Valentine had as yet seen – his face being, moreover, undisfigured by tattoo marks'.²² Lucy insists that Hemipo's life be spared, which impresses him so much that he and all his people become Christians. Waihoura and Rahana also become 'true and earnest Christians', marry, and settle down nearby in 'a house after the English model'.²³ *Holmwood* and *Waihoura* read more like religious tracts or

emigrant propaganda than adventure stories, and they also have shortcomings as historical novels; for example, the rapidity and ease with which the settlers establish themselves owes more to Kingston's wishful thinking than historical reality.

Emilia Marryat's *Amongst the Maoris: A Book of Adventure* (1874) also contains a certain amount of preaching, but the conversion it is concerned with is not of the Maori, who are described as a dying race, incapable of being civilized, but of the hero, Jack Stanley. Sixteen-year-old Jack discovers after his father's death that Mr Stanley had been duped by his unscrupulous business partner, William Maitland, and sets off to New Zealand to find Maitland and bring him to justice. He is accompanied by his friend, Hope Bernard, who, unbeknown to Jack, is Maitland's son. They undergo a series of adventures, which, while exciting in themselves, often have an underlying message. For example, Jack is held captive for several weeks by an evil tohunga, in revenge for the derogatory remarks Jack has made about him; but while Jack can see that the tohunga's actions are reprehensible, he does not immediately realize that his own plans for revenge on Maitland are equally unchristian. It is not until Hope saves Jack's life when their canoe capsizes on the Waikato River, and Jack discovers Hope's true identity, that he has a change of heart. Soon after, Jack finds Maitland, who has repented of his wicked ways and is living as a hermit, and the book ends with reunions and forgiveness. Hope and Jack stay in New Zealand until Maitland's death, when they each inherit half of his fortune and return to England.

While the text of *Amongst the Maoris* suggests that Marryat had access to a considerable amount of information about New Zealand (one of the characters, Colonel Bradshaw, gives frequent dissertations on the indigenous flora and fauna), her concept of the country's geography is vague. For example, Jack, Hope and the Colonel walk from Wellington to Auckland, a distance of over 600 kilometres, much of which would have been in the 1850s, the time the story is set, virtually trackless bush. However, the trip does not seem to take long; they do not have to cross any rivers or climb any hills, and, other than two Maori pa which offer them hospitality, the travellers do not pass through any settlements on the way, or meet any other Pakeha until they reach Auckland.²⁴ The Colonel then returns to Wellington by river, a geographical impossibility. As the title indicates, the book gives many details of

life in a Maori pa, but since the perspective is that of an English outsider, most of them are negative. The Maori are represented as ugly and dirty, with unhygienic habits and barbarous practices including cannibalism and infanticide. Claudia Marquis notes that Marryat seems to share her characters' disgust at Maori customs, and emphasises 'the Kristevan power of horror, the abjection, the fixation on abomination, filth, and threatening disorder'.²⁵ The only Maori Jack finds tolerable is Marara, who is a Christian and has fair hair and skin so does not look like a Maori; and Marara reciprocates by taking a 'romantic fancy'²⁶ to Jack and helping him to escape from the tohunga; but in spite of this his status remains inferior, and he becomes Jack's servant, rather than his friend. Even Colonel Bradshaw, who is sympathetic to the Maori and considers them very intelligent, does not think that they can ever be civilized.

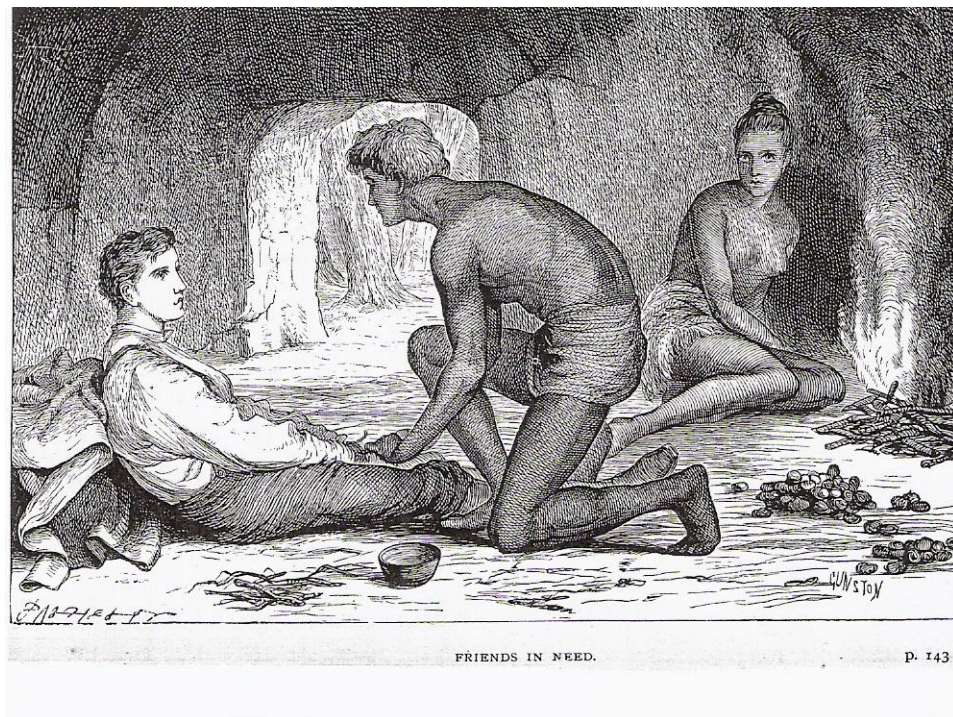


Illustration by Gunston for *Amongst the Maoris* by Emilia Marryat, p.142.

The illustration of Jack as a prisoner in the tohunga's hut shows him reclining languidly on the floor gazing at Marara, who is kneeling at his side and holding his hand while Yuata, the tohunga's daughter, sits by the fire clad in nothing but a very short skirt and a soulful expression. Presumably it was acceptable to show bare breasts in a book for children if the subject were a native girl rather than an Englishwoman. In any event, Jack is unmoved: 'her face was too much of the Maori type to excite any feeling of admiration in a European.'²⁷

The narrative is mainly focalized by Jack, but there is also an overt narrator and a narratee. At times the author addresses the reader in a jocular tone similar to that adopted by E. Nesbit thirty years later:

The night upon which my story opens was a very foggy one, sometime in November. Perhaps had I said my story opens on an afternoon in November, and the scene is laid in London, I might have omitted writing the fact that it was foggy. But then, you see, some people are so obtuse: they don't take in an idea unless it is put down in black and white; but that does not, of course, apply to you and me, but to the rest of the world, who are dull people.²⁸

More often, however, the purpose is to moralise:

Think of it sometimes, boys and girls, while your parents are still with you, lest other feelings besides those of sorrow and regret for your own loss should come into your hearts when you look upon your father's or your mother's dead face – feelings of remorse for your own shortcomings and want of duty.²⁹

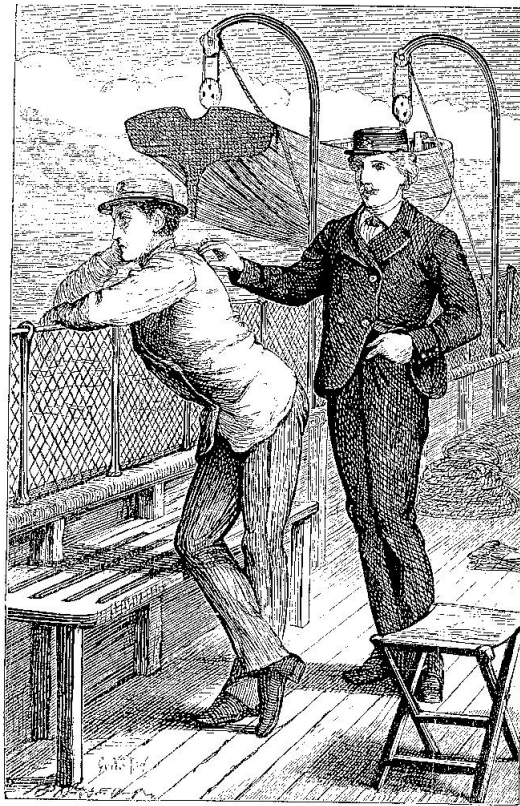
It is clear that the author perceives the narratees as children, even though the protagonists of the story are older – Jack is sixteen, and Hope Bernard is twenty-four and a qualified doctor. Hope is a rather colourless character, but Jack, in spite of the flaws in his character which Marryat is at pains to point out, is an attractive hero, who charms everyone he meets (with the notable exception of the tohunga). He is artistic and sensitive, and regularly dissolves 'into a passion of tears',³⁰ at the sight of a particularly beautiful scene, or when he thinks of his dead father; or at other moments of heightened emotion, such as his rescue from the pa, when he 'threw himself upon Bernard's neck, and, losing all self-control, burst into tears'.³¹

To the modern reader the intense friendship between Jack and Hope has homosexual overtones – there are frequent references to their love for each other, and they often embrace and clasp each other's hands – although it is unlikely that Marryat would have seen their relationship in this light. The book ends with both unmarried, and a declaration that 'Jack Stanley and Hope Bernard will always continue, as they have hitherto been, firm friends and brothers'.³² *Amongst the Maoris* has a great deal in common with the 'male quest romance' as defined by Elaine Showalter in *Sexual Anarchy*:

In various ways, these stories represent a yearning for escape from a confining society, rigidly structured in terms of gender, class and race, to a mythologized

place elsewhere where men can be freed from the constraints of Victorian morality. In the caves, or jungles, or mountains of this other place, the heroes of romance explore their secret selves in an anarchic place which can safely be called the “primitive”. Quest narratives all involve a penetration into the imagined center of an exotic civilization [...] a place inhabited by another and darker race.³³

Showalter suggests that these romances are a reflection of the society and culture of the late nineteenth and early twentieth centuries, when many men were accustomed to the intense male friendships of their public schools, and often lived bachelor lifestyles, marrying late or not at all; and she argues that they represent a coded, secret discussion of homosexuality. However, *Amongst the Maoris* was published in 1875, slightly earlier than the *fin de siècle* adult novels discussed by Showalter, and the author is female, while the male quest romances were written by men. (Similar motifs of male friendship occur in the adult New Zealand settler fiction of G. B. Lancaster [Edith Lyttleton]; for example in *Sons o' Men* [1904], and *The Tracks we Tread* [1907]).



‘Bernard Rejoins Jack Stanley’ (frontispiece) and ‘Bernard saves Jack from Drowning (p.208)
Illustrations by Gunston for *Amongst the Maoris* by Emilia Marryat.

The illustrations could also be seen to have homoerotic overtones: for example, one of a rather effeminate Hope touching Jack on the shoulder, and another of Hope cradling Jack's body after saving him from drowning.

Amongst the Maoris departs from the emigrant novel template in that, rather than describing successful settlement by an immigrant family, it concerns two young men who have adventures in New Zealand and then return to England; and the same applies to *The Boy Colonists; or Eight Years of Colonial Life in Otago, New Zealand* (1878). This book, moreover, has the distinction of being the only nineteenth century text by an author who had actually been to New Zealand, and it is not so much a novel as a thinly veiled autobiography, as the author, the Reverend Ernest Simeon Elwell, acknowledges in the Introduction:

The following pages contain simply a brief and plain narrative of what occurred to a settler in the Province of Otago, New Zealand, during the years 1859-1867. [...] Many of the names are real, and many of the facts are related almost in the order in which they occurred, a greater part of the book being simply an enlargement of a diary. My aim has been to write not so much an interesting as a true account.³⁴

The Boy Colonists is similar in subject and style to Samuel Butler's *A First Year in Canterbury Settlement* (1863) and Laurence Kennaway's *Crusts* (1867), which are also autobiographical accounts by young men of their experience of pioneer life in the South Island during this period. *The Boy Colonists* relates the experiences of two boys, Harry and Ernest, aged sixteen and seventeen, who emigrate to New Zealand to work as cadets on a sheep station near Oamaru. The story begins with the voyage to New Zealand. The author comments that, 'The incidents of interest on the voyage were very few',³⁵ an unusual remark given that these 'incidents' include two fires on board ship; and a number of severe storms, with forty foot waves that crash over the ship, break the bulwarks and flood the cabins.

The boys find on their arrival at the sheep station that conditions are primitive, and they are initially 'rather horrified' with their accommodation – a rude mud hut with a thatched roof, and tiers of bunks with grass for mattresses. 'The floor was of earth, and seemed eloquent of fleas. The blankets were hardly calculated to inspire Englishmen with confidence.'³⁶ They subsequently have to cope with even rougher

living conditions, spending months on end living in a tent which becomes over-run by mice, blow-flies and fleas. (One night Ernest kills one hundred and seventy-three blow-flies before he can get to sleep.) The cadets have to cook for themselves, and their diet consists of mutton, which they butcher themselves, and either potatoes, bread, scones or 'fritters', made of flour and water paste fried in boiling grease. Unlike the emigrant novels in which the rapid establishment of farms appears to be achieved with comparative ease, *The Boy Colonists* gives a much more realistic view of the effort required. The work is hard and repetitive, as Ernest explains in a letter to his parents when his younger brother is considering coming to New Zealand:

I do not wish him to come out thinking he will be able to do great things with little or no trouble, and to return to England in a few years with a fortune: very far from it. He will have to work in the sheep and cattle yard, milk cows, herd sheep, carpenter, put up fencing, dig ditches, plant and dig potatoes. [...] At sheep-washing time, he must go up to his neck in water and work all day for two or three days together from six in the morning till eight at night in wet clothes, and no fire to go to, or at all events a precious small one. In shearing time, he must be up at 4.30 a.m., fill the pens, count out the shorn sheep, look after the men, roll up fleeces and help put the bales on the dray, &c., &c., till seven p.m. every day for three or four weeks, and *that* is very hard work.³⁷

The Boy Colonists is based on Ernest's diary, and suffers from the defects of the diary form, in that it focuses on the minutiae of day-to-day happenings at the expense of the larger picture, and the view is limited to that of only one focalizer. Although there are detailed accounts of daily routines, there are frustrating gaps in the narrative; for example, there is no information about Harry and Ernest's lives before they set out to New Zealand, no explanation as to why Ernest decides to leave and what he does after his return to England, and no reflection on the boys' experiences as a whole. Ernest gives almost minute-by-minute accounts of his farming activities, but gives only tantalising glimpses of other events, such as a trip to Dunedin to deliver horses to 'Mr P.' 'He reached Mr P's house, where he stayed several weeks and enjoyed himself very much before returning to the station.'³⁸ It would have been fascinating to have a first-hand account of what a young man did to 'enjoy himself very much' in Dunedin in the 1860s. Despite its narrative deficiencies, however, *The Boy Colonists* provides a more realistic picture of settler life than the other historical novels of the time.

The Redfords, an Emigrant Story (1886), the only other Victorian novel set in Otago, is considerably less authentic, and it is apparent that the author, Mrs George Cupples, had not visited New Zealand. Her descriptions of the bush, for example, combine Australian and New Zealand flora and fauna, with gum trees growing next to tree-ferns, and cockatoos and laughing jackasses adding their cries to those of the morepork. The plot is no more plausible, being closely based on that of *Distant Homes*. After a florid introduction describing the Redfords' idyllic country home in England, the author adopts a much brisker tone, and relates the adventures of the Redford family in a mere six chapters. The first chapter describes the decision to emigrate and preparations for leaving, and the second is devoted to the voyage to New Zealand. This is fairly uneventful, the most exciting incident being the discovery of a stowaway, an unprepossessing boy named Tim Napper, who attaches himself to the Redfords, in particular the eldest daughter, Maud, who teaches him to read and write and say his prayers. The Redfords (and Tim) settle near Dunedin, at a place named Poatipa Hook, and within months they are supporting themselves by selling produce from their farm, which they have stocked with sheep, cows, pigs, goats, rabbits, pigeons and poultry, as well as an impressive variety of crops. Their Maori worker, William, unfortunately takes to drink ('a thing most dangerous for any native to indulge in'³⁹), and leaves under dramatic circumstances – he tries to set fire to the house and is shot by the Redfords' friend, Mr Harkom. 'Whether William was fatally wounded or only slightly hurt, could not be discovered, as he did not appear at the Hook again, to the great relief of the female portion of the family.'⁴⁰ The book ends with the discovery of a lost will which leaves Mrs Redford half of her father's estate, but rather than returning to their former life in England, the Redfords decide they prefer to stay in New Zealand. Mr Redford thinks that, "it would be hardly fair to run away from the colony that has served us so well in the days of our adversity. Dunedin has been good to us, and it is my duty to stand by her now."⁴¹

The Redfords, in fact, gives little sense of what life was like in Dunedin during the 1850s, other than the first impression of the town, 'laid out on a pattern of regular streets, on a most extensive scale,'⁴² but with only a few wooden houses actually built. The only historical incident mentioned is a report of the discovery of gold, and the departure of hundreds of men who leave their regular employment to try their

fortunes in the gold fields. Nor could the Redfords' experiences truthfully be termed 'days of adversity', for, like Kingston (and unlike Elwell), Mrs Cupples gives an optimistic view of pioneer life, and glosses over the work required. The only activity described in any detail is the process of settling into the house, which reveals that the family have brought with them their piano, tiger rug, and 'ever so many of the nice drawing-room ornaments',⁴³ but no beds, tables, chairs or cupboards; however, the boys quickly construct the necessary furniture from packing cases. Once this is accomplished, the Redfords have ample leisure time for musical evenings, picnics, and other social gatherings.

As well as the somewhat unrealistic view it presents of the emigrant experience, the characterization is also perfunctory. The eight children are more or less indistinguishable, other than seventeen-year-old Maud, who is universally popular for her sweet and gentle nature. She is also accomplished – teaching her siblings, making butter, baking bread, and playing the piano with equal ease – and she is rewarded at the end of the book by marriage to Mr Harkom, though, with his 'great beard, high boots, and cabbage-leaf hat',⁴⁴ he is hardly a figure of romance. All of the Redfords ultimately benefit from their decision to emigrate, with the restoration of their family life possibly the greatest advantage. At 'Home' Mr Redford was always absent at work, and the older children were at boarding school, whereas in New Zealand the family unit live and work together in a pastoral harmony they could never have attained in industrialized England.

In direct contrast to the plodding narrative of *The Boy Colonists*, and the domestic details of *The Redfords*, G. A. Henty's *Maori and Settler* (1891) is a rollicking yarn which whisks its heroes from adventure to adventure at breakneck speed. George Albert Henty was, like Kingston, one of the most popular and prolific writers of the late nineteenth century, producing more than two hundred titles, ninety of them adventure stories for boys.

He was in fact the dominant figure in English boys' fiction from the 1880s until his death [1902]; it is estimated that some 25 million copies of his books had been sold by 1914. They were read all over the English-speaking world [...] and came to be credited with being most English boys' main source of historical knowledge.⁴⁵

Henty's historical novels followed a predictable pattern:

There is a recognisable Henty formula at work in most of his books: a plucky youngster gets caught up in a military career through which he achieves recognition and an appropriate reward. Henty's heroes are uncomplicated young men (usually accompanied by a comic side-kick). They believe that boxing sharpens the wits better than books, and are fiercely patriotic, assuming that, as muscular Englishmen, they are capable of administering a "thoroughly sound and manly thrashing" to any number of ruffians. This belief system encompasses most kinds of chauvinism: Henty's books promulgate the idea that pluck and fighting power (rightly) made the British masters of all colonized peoples, and the British gentlemen the master of all.⁴⁶

The 'plucky youngster' in *Maori and Settler* is fifteen-year-old Wilfrid Renshaw, who travels to New Zealand with his parents and sixteen-year-old sister Marian (and two young men, the gardener's sons, to help with the heavy work), when the family loses its money through a bank failure. The 'side-kick' in this case is Wilfrid's cabin mate, Mr Atherton, an immensely large man with an encyclopaedic knowledge, a great sense of humour, often directed against himself, and enormous physical strength. Seven of the eighteen chapters deal with the eventful voyage to New Zealand via Cape Horn; including a fracas during a stop in Rio, an attack on the ship's boat by natives while the ship is anchored off Tierra del Fuego, and several severe storms, during one of which the mainmast and fore-mast are blown overboard. When the ship stops at an island to get a new mast it is attacked by the natives, who are repulsed, thanks to Mr Atherton, though not before the Captain, four sailors and two passengers, as well as sixty natives, are killed. In spite of this, Mr Renshaw observes to his wife:

"The voyage is just finished, Helen. [...] It has been a pleasant time, I am sorry it is over."

"A very pleasant time, Alfred," she replied, "one of the most pleasant I have ever spent."⁴⁷

The Renshaws, Mr Atherton, and several of their shipmates, purchase land in Hawke Bay, soon establish comfortable homes and productive farms, and, as in Kingston's *Waihoua*, make rapid progress in re-creating an English landscape in the New Zealand bush. Their pleasant life is interrupted by the Hau-Hau uprising, and Wilfrid joins the volunteer corps. Mr Atherton says he is too large to keep up, but nevertheless takes part in the fighting, to great effect because he is a crack shot.

Henty's account of the campaign, closely based on eye-witness accounts, will be considered in Chapter Six. Suffice to say that, when Wilfrid is wounded, Atherton's heroic exertions on his behalf save the day (and incidentally cause Atherton to lose weight; he eventually slims down from twenty-six to eighteen stone). After three years in New Zealand, Atherton, who is already a wealthy man, inherits a fortune from an aunt and has to return to England. He marries Marian (at twenty, eighteen years his junior) and offers Mr Renshaw the position of agent on his English estate. Wilfrid stays in New Zealand, marries, becomes a successful businessman and 'one of the leading men of the colony'; but eventually he, too, 'returned home with his wife and daughters with a fortune amply sufficient to enable them to live at ease',⁴⁸ leaving his sons to continue the business in New Zealand.

Although Henty never visited New Zealand, much of *Maori and Settler*, particularly the account of the Hau-Hau uprising, is based on fact. Henty was in the British army for five years, starting with the Crimean campaign, and began his career as war correspondent while still serving. He covered all the conflicts of the later nineteenth century and travelled widely; he was well-equipped, therefore, to write historical novels based on military campaigns. He took pains to research his topics, often quoting verbatim from his sources, and prided himself on his seriousness of purpose and his accuracy. His books are very much reflections of the values of his time: "I would not have believed it if I had not seen it," Bob, the elder of the two brothers, exclaimed as he stood breathless with the perspiration streaming from his forehead, "that these black chaps could have beaten Englishmen like that!"⁴⁹

Unlike *The Boy Settlers*, and *Maori and Settler*, which are told largely from the point of view of the young male protagonists, H. A. Forde's *Across Two Seas* (1894) offers a much broader perspective, being focalized by various members of a large and lively family of emigrants. Mrs Vaughan, in straitened circumstances after the death of her husband, decides to emigrate from Manchester to New Zealand with nine children; her own eight, ranging in age from two-year-old Daisy to twenty-year-old Mark, and the children's friend George, not forgetting their faithful maid, Betsy. The first two chapters are devoted to the family's decision to emigrate and their preparations,

including a comical scene in which the children create chaos while trying to pack their favourite possessions:

Chairs were filled with books and toys: a boy and a great box covered the large table; Daisy, propped by Phil, squatted on the chimney piece; while Joss clung like some new species of spider to the top shelf of the bookcase; and the legs of the two small boys protruded from the cupboard below her.

“Juliet, you can’t take all your poetry books; leave that incomprehensible Browning behind.”

“Joss, the wax doll’s nose is in awful danger here; Daisy’s donkey has got its hoof upon it.”

“Oh, dear! This inkstand is running out all over the schoolbooks! Mother mine, need we take such an awful lot of them? Phil says we must.”

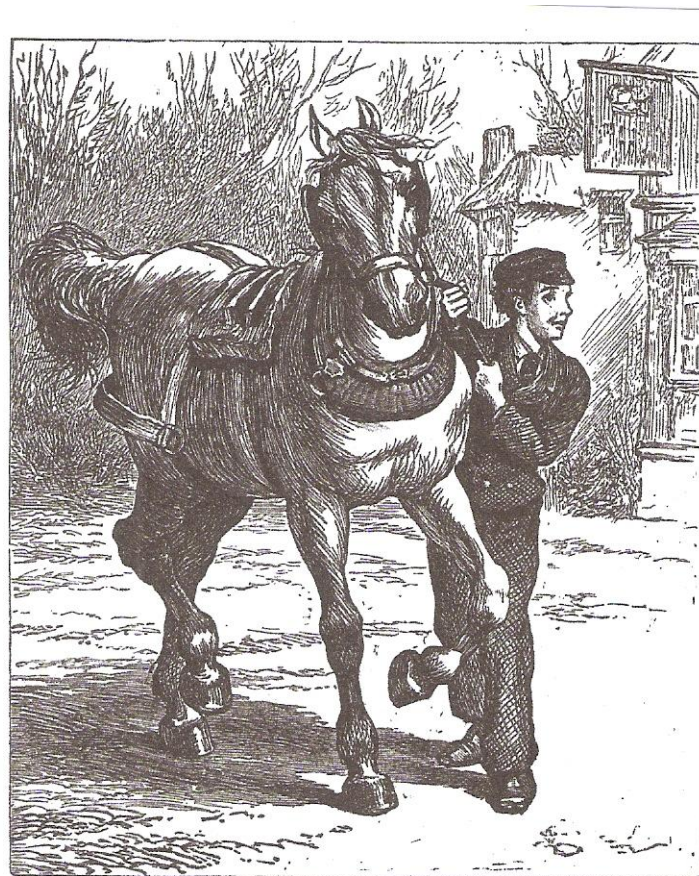
So said Dick the packer; while a chorus of disclaimers, objectors, and grumblers rent the air. Mrs Vaughan sat down to laugh, and was immediately dragged up by Dick, who declared that Phil’s ‘specimens’ were all on that chair. There really was no safe place but the table to sit upon.⁵⁰

Another two chapters describe the voyage, during which a young boy is lost overboard, and violent gales cause frequent flooding of the cabins. On arrival in New Zealand the Vaughans obtain a piece of land north of Auckland and create a successful farm. The four older boys work outside cultivating the land, looking after the stock, building bridges and adding on to the house, while Mrs Vaughan, Betsy, and the girls look after the housework, the milking and the poultry, and teach the younger children. Sundays are kept free of work and devoted to a religious service and hymns, re-reading letters from ‘home’, and a family singing session, accompanied by Mrs Vaughan on her guitar.

The first two years are described in some detail: both the work of establishing the farm, and various adventures, such as encounters with the friendly local Maori; several near drownings; the kidnapping of Daisy by a wandering group of Maori gipsies; and the discovery of George’s long-lost brother. The narrative is faster paced and the characters are more sympathetically portrayed than in many other Victorian settler novels, but *Across Two Seas* shares their moralizing tendencies. As with Lucy in *Distant Homes*, Dick, an adventurous and impulsive boy who is frequently at loggerheads with his older brother Mark, has his rebellious streak tamed; so much so that he decides to become a missionary. In the final chapter, which jumps forward six years, all the family members are prosperous, and happily settled in New Zealand,

with the exception of Dick, who has been murdered at his missionary post in Melanesia. The circumstances and manner of his death appear to be modelled on the murder of Bishop Patteson on the Melanesian island of Nukapu in 1871.⁵¹

While the author of *Across Two Seas* has taken pains to present a reasonably accurate account of New Zealand during the 1860s, the artist who provided the illustrations was obviously not familiar with this country, and the drawings have a decidedly English appearance. For example, when the Vaughans borrow a horse in the coastal settlement of Matitura, the illustration shows the animal being led out by a well-dressed young man in a shirt and tie, with a background of substantial two-storied thatched buildings, one of which has bow windows and an inn sign.



BRINGING OUT 'PLUNGING JOE.'

Illustration for *Across Two Seas* by H. A. Forde, p.43 (Illustrator unknown).

The Maori in the illustrations (and on the book's cover) do not have Maori features, and the chief appears to be wearing an ostrich plume in his hair, as well as sporting unusual facial tattoos. There is a distinct contrast between fair-haired, pale-skinned

Daisy in her white pinafore, and the dark Maori. This contrast is even more obvious in the coloured version of this illustration on the cover.

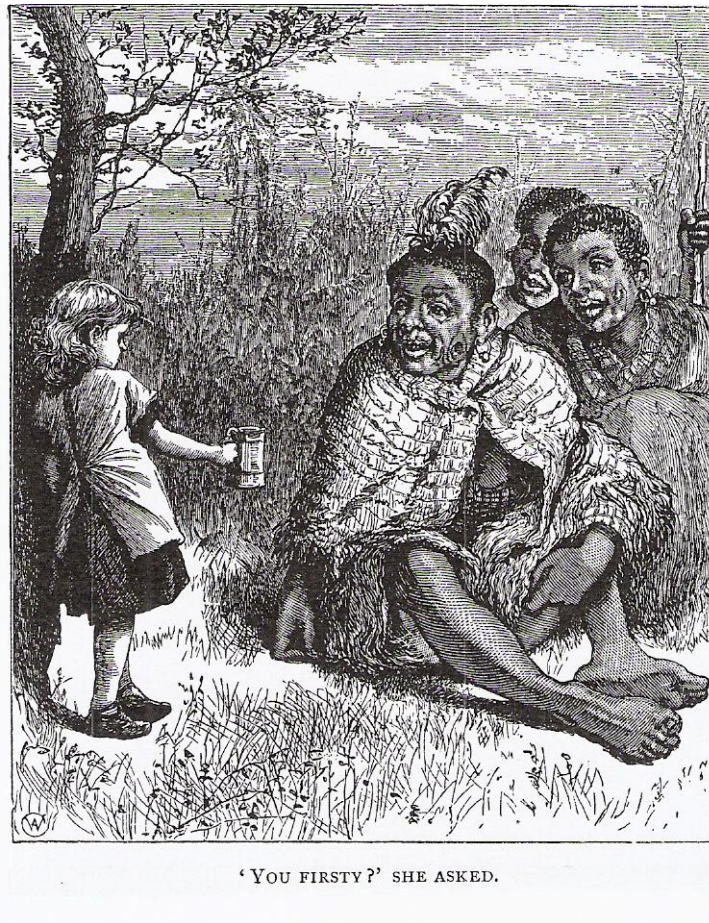


Illustration for *Across Two Seas* by H. A. Forde, p.98 (Illustrator unknown).

The illustrator of Eleanor Stredder's *Doing and Daring: A New Zealand Story* (1899) is obviously equally unfamiliar with New Zealand and its inhabitants.⁵² In the book's black and white illustrations, the Maori chiefs Nga-Hepé and Kakiki resemble Native Americans, and the Maori canoe is drawn as a Native American canoe rather than the dugout mentioned in the text. Whero, Nga-Hepé's son, is shown in all of the illustrations wearing a white dress or nightshirt (in contrast to the well-dressed English boy, Edwin), even though he has come from school, where he would presumably have been wearing conventional European clothing. It is interesting that in these illustrations it is Maori Whero rather than English Edwin who is dressed in white, as it is generally the Pakeha characters who are shown wearing white clothing.



Illustrations by A. Rhind for *Doing and Daring* by Eleanor Stredder, frontispiece and p.273.

The coloured picture on the cover, of the eruption of Mount Tarawera, depicts the mountain as a towering volcanic cone, shooting streams of lava high into the air, quite unlike the geographic reality. There is a certain amount of geographical confusion in the text as well – the Lee family settles on a farm in the Waikato, and the oldest son Edwin befriends Whero, whose pa, although it is near the farm, is said to be in the King Country; yet both are close enough to Mount Tarawera (which is in the Bay of Plenty) to be covered in mud when the volcano erupts. The children escape from the eruption by fleeing to the west coast (although Tarawera is closer to the east coast, and even that is a considerable distance away) and then return home by catching a steamer up the Waikato River.

The story, which is set in 1886 (though the date is not mentioned), concerns Mr Lee, ‘a newly arrived settler with his four children, journeying to take possession of a government allotment in the Waikato district’.⁵³ The Lees make their home in an old school house, which was abandoned during the Hauhau uprising, and Mr Lee and his sons, Edwin and Cuthbert, with occasional help from the rabbiters who have a camp nearby, clear the bush around the house. Very little space is given to their arrival and

the setting up of the farm, as the first few chapters are devoted mainly to Edwin's involvement in the affairs of Nga-Hepé, a local Maori chief. Nga-Hepé is attacked by other Maori, who, envious of his wealth, steal all his possessions and leave him for dead. Edwin is able to give some assistance, and earns the friendship of Nga-Hepé's son, Whero. In Chapter VI, Tarawera erupts, and the remainder of the book's twenty-one chapters deal with the eruption and its aftermath. This aspect will be further discussed in Chapter Eight, along with other books about the Tarawera eruption.

Stredder makes no attempt to describe the process of settling in New Zealand, unlike most of the other books in this section. The focus is mainly on the adventures of the children – Edwin, Audrey, Cuthbert and Effie – during and after the eruption; and more particularly, the exploits of Edwin and Whero as they dash about through the congealing mud rescuing people, and then pursue and capture the thief who has stolen money from both Nga-Hepé and Mr Lee. A notable feature of the book is the description of the hazards of travel during the 1880s; the coach travels along a road which is 'a mere wheel-track cut in the rock' and the horses are described as 'floundering through the two feet deep of mud which New Zealanders call a bush road'.⁵⁴ Coach passengers are constantly flung about, and are bruised and battered by the time their journey comes to a premature end when the coach loses a wheel. Sea transport is no less hazardous, and Edwin and Cuthbert have to rescue the crew of a ship which is wrecked on the rocks near the hut where they are sheltering after the eruption. Other forms of transport which are mentioned include steam boats and coal barges on the Waikato River, and these feature also in *The Boy Settler* published a few years after *Doing and Daring*.

The title of *The Boy Settler* (1907) by Hannah C. Storer is rather misleading, for although the protagonist, Sydney Bartlett, is only seven when the story begins, it is not until a third of the way through the book that Sydney decides to emigrate, and by then he is already nineteen. Nor is he a settler in the commonly used sense of a pioneer carving out a home in the New Zealand wilderness: his intention is to work as clerk in Auckland, and it is only when this proves impossible that he ventures into the countryside. Even then he is employed by others rather than striking out on his own. The first few chapters describe how orphaned Sydney is adopted by his bachelor

uncle and sent to boarding school, where he befriends a fellow pupil, and meets and falls in love with his friend's sister, Beatrice. The two following chapters are devoted to a detailed description of how Sydney's uncle is enticed into marriage by a devious and encroaching young woman. Sydney is made so unwelcome by his new aunt that he decides to go to New Zealand. (No reason is given for choosing New Zealand, other than that someone has lent him a hand-book about it.) The story is set during the 1870s, so the journey is by steamer rather than sailing ship, and when Sydney arrives in New Zealand there is a reasonably well-established infrastructure; he is able to travel by train and read the *New Zealand Herald*. His first job is as a fireman on a steamboat on the Waikato, but he is soon offered a position on a farm by a gentleman, Mr Twopenny, who is revealed to be a friend of Sydney's father. After several years, Sydney joins the armed constabulary in Taranaki, and his experiences are recounted in the form of a journal (apparently based on a real diary⁵⁵) which gives an unheroic view of the soldiers who are ostensibly protecting settlers against the Maori rebels, but in fact take pains to do as little as possible. On the death of Mr Twopenny, Sydney inherits his farm, and is able to fulfill his ambition of marrying his childhood love, Beatrice.

The Boy Settler was published by the Religious Tract Society, so there is a strong religious theme, expressed not only through the characters and plot, but also by way of direct address by the narrator:

Oh, fathers and mothers, who have let your boys go from you into the wide, wide world, far beyond your ken, untrammelled by the restraints imposed by a Christian community, see to it that you arm them for the fight with faith in God, habits of rigid self-control, and an unflinching devotion to purity, truth and honour; then you can honestly follow them with your prayers.⁵⁶

Unlike the protagonists of most of the Victorian novels, Sydney makes no attempt to evangelize the Maori, whom he, like Colonel Bradshaw in *Amongst the Maori*, regards as a dying race; instead the book focuses on his own faith, and on his temperance. Sydney abominates alcohol and swearing, and he is constantly compared favourably with the drunken, foul-mouthed men with whom he comes into contact. The author also considers cleanliness is next to godliness, and stresses Sydney's habit of frequent washing. Sydney is rewarded for his piety by gaining a

farm (as a gift from a benefactor rather than through his own efforts), and by marriage to a bride of superior character and status.

H. Louisa Bedford's *Under One Standard or The Touch that Makes Us Kin: A Story of the Time of the Maori War* (1916) was published by the Society for Promoting Christian Knowledge, so it, too, has a strong religious theme. The 'touch that makes us kin' of the title is the Christian faith, and much emphasis is given to the efforts of Bishop Selwyn to convert the Maori to Christianity. There is also a well-plotted story, revolving around orphaned fourteen-year-old David, who unwillingly accompanies his older sister Mary and her husband Abel when they emigrate to Taranaki in 1859 to settle on a farm owned by Abel's uncle Jacob. On the boat David meets a young man, Folkes, who teaches him Maori and becomes his intellectual and religious mentor. Folkes was taught Maori by Bishop Selwyn and shares his sympathy for the Maori people. Once in New Zealand, however, David realizes not everyone shares these views. Uncle Jacob calls the Maori 'niggers' and objects to the way they are stirring up trouble about the issue of land ownership.

Unlike most of the earlier authors, Bedford has a realistic view of the effort involved in settling in a new land. 'There ensued for David the real discipline of a settler's life, week after week of hard manual labour with never a break in the monotony, and nothing of the romantic interest which had marked the first month of life in New Zealand.'⁵⁷ For Mary, life is even worse, as she has to cope not only with the unaccustomed physical work, but with severe homesickness, pregnancy, and a dread of the Maori. She longs to be back in 'dear, sweet England where, even if you have only a cottage to live in, you are in peace and safety, with no black faces grinning at you and cursing you'.⁵⁸ Her fears appear to be justified when war breaks out, and the family have to abandon their farm and retreat to New Plymouth for safety. Meanwhile, David has befriended George, a Maori boy who was educated by Bishop Selwyn (though apparently not very well, judging by his command of English).

"Who taught you English?" David asked, glad enough to return to his native tongue, and speaking loud and slow as if the boy were deaf.

"Chem father," answered his companion, quickly.

"Who?" cried David, in bewilderment.

“Bisop! Pakeha Bisop,” explained the Maori. “Listen! One, two, three years this boy learned school. Chem father taught him, chem father poured water on him and called him George.”⁵⁹

George warns David that the local Maori, led by his uncle, Wiremu Kingi, plan to drive the Pakeha settlers off their land. When the fighting erupts, George saves Folkes’ life and has a price put on his head by Kingi. He escapes into the bush, and develops consumption, but is found and cared for by David’s family and Folkes. Bishop Selwyn arrives just in time to be at George’s deathbed:

In a few minutes more the Bishop was kneeling on the rough floor of the verandah with George’s head cradled on his breast. [...]

Just as the morning broke with pearly softness over sea and land George’s eyes opened for the last time, resting on the Bishop’s face.

“Home,” he whispered; “George is close at home.”

The next moment he was *there*, and the Bishop, bending down, closed his eyes, plucked one of the arums that clustered around the verandah, and laid it between the hands, which he folded on George’s breast.⁶⁰

The character of George and the manner of his death have a marked resemblance to those of Josiah, the ‘faithful native boy’ of Sir William Martin (the Chief Justice of New Zealand) and his wife Mary Ann, who lived in Auckland from 1842 to 1874, and were close friends of Bishop Selwyn, as described in Lady Martin’s book, *Our Maoris*. George’s death is also very similar to that of the Martin’s Maori friend, David, who dies of consumption, lying in his bed on the verandah, with a view of the sea, and, in front, ‘masses of white arum flowers’.⁶¹ Lady Martin’s comment, ‘As the Maoris say of such deaths, “he had arrived at home”’⁶² is echoed by Bedford. *Our Maoris* was published in 1884 by the Society for Promoting Christian Knowledge, the same publisher as *Under One Standard* and Bedford undoubtedly used it as a source.⁶³ She makes sure that this affecting death-bed scene is not in vain; both David and Folkes are inspired to become missionaries, and Uncle Jacob’s prejudice against Maori evaporates.

The ending of *Under One Standard* does not conform to the more usual pattern in settler novels of the successful establishment of a new home in New Zealand. Like Jack and Hope in *Amongst the Maoris*, Ernest in *The Boy Colonists* and the Renshaws in *Maori and Settler*, Abel and Mary return to England; and although David stays in

New Zealand he does not settle down on the farm so painstakingly hewn from the bush. He chooses to become a minister and work among the Maori, even though he knows it will not be easy. Most of the narrative is told from David's perspective, which allows the author to trace the way his initial dislike of New Zealand gradually changes to interest, and then whole-hearted commitment. It also enables her to show both sides of the conflict in Taranaki, through David's association with the Pakeha settlers on the one hand, and with Maori George and Bishop Selwyn on the other. Bedford's account of the war is closely based on the historical record, but it is unusual in the degree of sympathy it expresses for the Maori cause. This aspect of the book will be further discussed in Chapter Six.

Fifty-four years separate the publication of *Distant Homes* and *Under One Standard*, but all eleven books considered in this chapter have in common not merely the topic of English immigration to New Zealand and adventures in an exotic locale but remarkably similar ideologies. In an unpublished doctoral thesis, 'Girls and Boys Come Out to Stay: Ideological Formations in New Zealand-set Children's Fiction 1862-1917', Jacqueline Beets identifies a number of tropes with ideological significance which recur in the books written during this time. These include Pakeha indigenization, Maori degeneration and dispossession, middle-class Pakeha mentality, and a puritan ethos emphasising sound morals and religious sensibility.

Overall, these texts are concerned to depict a society in which all marginal, threatening, or disruptive elements – the Maori, the vagabond, the working-class rebel, the bold female, the drunkard, the atheist, the fornicator, even the Irish emigrant and the Roman Catholic – are sidelined or eliminated, often through the diligent examples of middle-class English youngsters. Many works see the colonial antipodes as the proving or improving ground for imperial zeal, suggesting that the ideals of the British Empire can be not only achieved but also bettered in New Zealand. This is the endeavour of a British imperial hegemony striving to foster a spirit of control abroad as well as at home, expressed through works of junior fiction utilised as propaganda. These texts are united in their sense of imperial mission, even if sometimes in disagreement as to how this may best be achieved.⁶⁴

As Beets points out, these books, like most Victorian literature for children, are 'recreation with a purpose', providing 'a moral map and justification of colonization'; and prescribing 'a path (the emigrant passage and development of puritan habits), a

goal (perpetuation of the empire by establishing pakeha land ownership, a home, and a family), and a meaning to life (physical blessing on earth; eternal blessings in Heaven).⁶⁵

These books are distinguished from the later books about emigration to New Zealand (which form the subject of the next chapter) by the overt nature of their imperial and religious ideologies. Plots, settings, characterization, language, and imagery are structured so as to convey explicit messages; and narrators frequently address readers directly to reinforce particular ideas. Jeffrey Richards observes that during this time, ‘Britain was saturated with the ethos and attitudes of empire’,⁶⁶ and juvenile literature, steeped in every aspect of imperialism, functions ‘not just as a mirror of the age but an active agency constructing and perpetuating a view of the world in which British imperialism was an integral part of the cultural and psychological formation of each new generation of readers’.⁶⁷ One of the main imperial aims of these texts is the promotion of emigration to New Zealand and the establishment of outposts of British civilization in a far-flung corner of the Empire. Not all are as blatant as Kingston’s *Holmwood*, with its pages of information and helpful hints for prospective emigrants, but most of the books depict New Zealand as a desirable place to live, and imply that prosperous and happy homes can be easily established. Mr Graham in *Distant Homes* tells his family that, “‘A friend of mine, who has been living out there for three years, says there is no place like it; and that nobody going there would ever wish to live in England again’”.⁶⁸ In *Maori and Settler*, Wilfred assures his mother that New Zealand is preferable to Canada:

“Because, in the first place, the climate is a great deal pleasanter, and, in the second place, I believe that as the passage-money is higher the emigrants are of a better class, and we are likely to have more pleasant neighbours – people that you and father can associate with – than we would have if we went to a backwood clearing in Canada.”⁶⁹

All of the protagonists of these texts are ‘emigrants of a better class’, who have suffered a reversal of fortune, and emigration is presented as a way that they can maintain their standard of living; or even enhance it by acquiring land and establishing country estates, goals which would have been difficult to achieve in England where land was usually owned by the landed gentry and passed on through

inheritance. Another advantage of starting a new life in the colonies is that family bonds are strengthened by the need for all family members to work together, rather than occupying separate spheres as in England (father at work, mother and infants at home, older children at school).

The general impression these books convey is that land can be easily obtained and transformed into a pseudo-England, planted with English plants and stocked with English animals, all of which thrive in the favourable conditions of the new country. The land is regarded as worthless in its original state; virgin bush is a wilderness to be tamed, and preferably replaced with 'superior' imported vegetation. The taming of the indigenous landscape is symbolised by the establishment of English-style gardens. Each settler homestead is soon surrounded by orchards, vegetable gardens and colourful flower beds: 'The flower-garden was a perfect wonder of beauty. Every English flower was there, mingled with many of those beautiful tropical plants that we dare not trust out of a hot-house in England.'⁷⁰ These gardens grow with astonishing speed, as in *Maori and Settler*:

The next three months made a great change in the appearance of The Glade. Three or four plots of gay flowers cut in the grass between the house and the river gave a brightness to its appearance. The house was now covered as far as the roof with greenery, and might well have been mistaken for a rustic bungalow standing in pretty grounds on the banks of the Thames. Behind, a large kitchen-garden was in full bearing.⁷¹

Historian Katherine Raine has pointed out that, 'Gardening was part of the physical and cultural settlement of New Zealand by Europeans, which involved a process of domestication'⁷². According to Raine, not only did the settlers:

presume the right as imperialists to claim land, but furthermore as colonists, they believed that they had a moral duty to develop it. Making these gardens of virtuous productivity and beautiful utility was "the work of civilization".⁷³

Gardening in these texts, as in reality, performs an ideological function:

While colonial horticulture displayed the power of nature through the growth of trees, fruitfulness and flowery abundance, it was to a greater degree a display of dominance over nature. By extension, it was also dominance over the indigenous people whose land they occupied, exploited, and transformed in appearance.⁷⁴

Although the settlers in these books are generally personally involved in breaking in their land, the rapid transformation of the landscape is greatly assisted by the aid of the servants and farm workers who have accompanied them from England. Only in *Amongst the Maoris*, where the Bradshaws' estate has 'all the elegance and refinement of an English home; with the one exception, that all the servants in the house and all the workmen about the premises were Maoris',⁷⁵ is the workforce exclusively Maori. In most cases, the 'emigrants of a better class' bring at least one servant with them, and social distinctions are carefully preserved. In *Distant Homes*, Lucy is 'quite horrified' when 'a very smart waiting-maid' in Nelson sits down on the sofa while speaking to Mrs Graham. Although the maid informs her that servants in New Zealand 'expect to be treated like one of the family',⁷⁶ the Grahams' servant, Bridget, knows her place, and provides not only household help but also comic relief. Like Tim Grogan in *Holmwood* and Biddy in *The Redfords*, she conforms to the comic Irish stereotype, being rather simple, and speaking with a broad brogue: "'Oh, misthress, av the savidges ate us win ye're away, what'll we say to ye win ye are coming agin?'"⁷⁷ While the Grahams are on good terms with their Maori neighbours, Bridget persists in regarding them as 'Rid Ingins':

She had never got over her horror of them, and was quite resigned to be scalped some day, and probably eaten; Tom having exercised his inventive genius in telling horrible stories of unfortunate people devoured by inhabitants of New Zealand, and assuring her the chief's head wife always claimed the nose as her *tit-bit*, and would assuredly eat Bridget's, it being so pretty.⁷⁸

Her resultant hysterical behaviour when the Maori come to visit is presented as a comical episode – she puts the bread basket on her head to protect her scalp and all the bread rolls fall out. Captain Graham reprimands Bridget for her 'absurd' conduct, but Tom's role in aggravating her fears seems to be regarded as a good joke. Betsy, the Vaughan family's maid in *Across Two Seas*, is also presented as a source of amusement, particularly in her attitude to the local Maori: "'I mean to stay in this country. If it weren't for those nasty brown natives, it would be a very tidy place.'"⁷⁹ As Beets observes, 'The outspoken, lower-class maid Betsy is frequently permitted to express sentiments the genteel Vaughans dare not utter',⁸⁰ and the same is true of other lower-class characters in these books. Nevertheless, although the socially superior characters (and the authors) are ready to laugh at their expense, these servants are also depicted as loyal and hardworking, and contributing materially to

the well-being of their employers; thus bolstering the notion of a unified 'Britishness' in which all classes and ethnicities participate and from which all benefit.

Only a few books depart from the pattern of the colonists' rapid and successful creation of new homes in New Zealand. In *The Boy Colonists* (which is based on the author's own experience rather than imagination and/or second-hand reports) Ernest spends much of his time in hard and monotonous work, and is happy to return to England, even though he has purchased land in Otago. His brother Arthur is not as hardy and cannot cope with the rough conditions; he comes to New Zealand at Ernest's suggestion, but stays only a few years, and is then robbed of all his money while waiting for a ship and goes back to England empty handed. *Maori and Settler* mentions a young Englishman whose dreams of making a new life for himself and his fiancée are destroyed when he is killed while felling trees. Henty does not present this as a tragedy, however, but rather as a stroke of luck for the Renshaw family, who are able to buy the unfortunate man's property and house for a very reasonable price, thus saving money and considerable labour. In spite of this good start, the Renshaws eventually return to England, as do Jack and Hope in *Amongst the Maoris*. The novels written during the early twentieth century rather than the Victorian period are also less optimistic about the ease of settling in New Zealand. *Under One Standard* stresses the hard work of carving a farm out of the bush, and Mary and Abel abandon their land when a legacy enables them to go 'Home'. Sydney in *The Boy Settler* lacks the pioneering spirit of his fictional predecessors and is happy to come to New Zealand to work as a clerk. On the whole, however, these texts fulfil the imperial mission of advocating emigration by presenting New Zealand as a land of opportunity where middle-class families can prosper.

The process of establishing outposts of British civilization in New Zealand is complicated by the fact that the country in which this takes place is already occupied, and these books employ a number of different strategies for dealing with this inconvenient fact. One of these is the concept of 'historical destiny' which presents Maori as savages who can rightfully be displaced by those races higher up the evolutionary scale, and posits the land as empty (*terra nullius*) because Maori are perceived not to be using it. As Tiffin and Lawson comment: 'Inscribing the natives

as primitive and unable to make use of the natural resources around them allowed first the biblical parable of the ten talents, and then the Darwinian theory of natural selection to justify their dispossession as part of the plan of Destiny.’⁸¹

This theory is most bluntly expressed in *Amongst the Maoris* by Colonel Bradshaw, who is presented in the book as a sensible man and an authority on New Zealand matters:

“I do not suppose they will ever civilize as a nation. Years hence New Zealand will be peopled by the English, and the natural “lords of the soil” will die out: they are doing so rapidly.” [...]

“There has always been in every age a dominant race, and no doubt it is so arranged for the advance of civilization. It does not seem so much as if the English nation endeavoured to push the rightful owners from their territory as that the owners become absorbed as it were. I think the settlers in this country have tried to educate, to civilize, and to Christianize the Maoris; but I doubt if anything will be done with them.”⁸²

In *The Boy Settler*, written thirty years later, Sydney expresses a similar view of the fate of the Maori race when he hears the sound of a tangi:

As they steamed away, the weird minor notes of their chant of sorrow followed them over the waters and sounded unspeakably plaintive.

“It almost sounds like the wail of a dying race,” thought Sydney. “And I suppose the Maoris are bound to go, just as the Indians have before the pale-faces in America.”⁸³

The old Maori chief in *Doing and Daring* is equally pessimistic about the effect on his people of the arrival of the Pakeha: ““Do I not see our people giving place to theirs? The very rat they have brought over seas drives away our kiore [the native rat] and we see him no more.””⁸⁴ In these books, the land is symbolically vacated by the indigenous inhabitants to make room for the racially superior newcomers.

Another strategy used by writers is that of assimilation, whereby Maori are depicted as gladly welcoming English settlers to New Zealand, and eagerly abandoning their own culture to adopt Pakeha ways. When Mrs Graham arrives at her new property in Canterbury, she is greeted by a deputation from the local pa: ““Wife of the good captain, we welcome you to our country; we shall call you mother, and be unto you as sons. Bid us serve you, and we will do it, even as a child obeys his parent.””⁸⁵ The

natives leave their pa and build a new one close to the Grahams' house because 'they loved the English and wished to be like them'.⁸⁶ The Maori chief, Tatau, in *Across Two Seas* is equally enamoured of his English neighbours. "Tatau love pakeha," was the beginning and end of everything. "Pakeha wise, cunning, all-powerful. 'Til pakeha come with iron pots and pans much trouble to make water boil even."⁸⁷ Tatau's wish to become like a Pakeha is symbolized by his fascination with two-year-old Daisy, who epitomises Englishness: 'Fair-haired Daisy, all white, and pink, and golden, like her English namesake, was a goodly picture for any eyes to light upon'.⁸⁸ Tatau sends his 'squaw' to offer mats, feathers and fruit in exchange for Daisy, and when this offer is rejected he tries another approach:

Tatau wished his tribe to acquire Pakeha ways [...] and his desire was to secure a white damsel, in process of time, as bride for his grandson, at this time eight years old. Master Hatu was even brought over to Golden Grove, clad simply in his own brown skin and a little fringed girdle, as a proof of the reality of the proposed noble connection; but again the party had to return sorrowful. The Pakeha maiden was not permitted to entertain the idea of such an alliance.⁸⁹

These texts imply that Maori are happy to be absorbed by the superior newcomers through imitation and intermarriage, and readily relinquish any claims to retaining their own identity.

The impossibility of Maori ever actually becoming Pakeha, however much they aspire to do so, is indicated by the many descriptions in these books of the bizaare appearance of Maori men and women who dress in European clothing. In *Amongst the Maoris*, Jack notices that: 'Some of these Maoris were dressed in their native mat and looked picturesque though filthy; whilst others had quite destroyed all interest in their appearance by adopting European dress, in which they looked awkward and ridiculous'.⁹⁰ Nga-Hepé in *Doing and Daring* is but one of many examples of a Maori who is held up to ridicule for wearing European clothing:

The tall black hat he wore might have been imported from Bond Street at the beginning of the season, barring the sea-bird's feathers stuck upright in the band. His legs were bare. A striped Austrian blanket was thrown over one shoulder and carefully draped about him. A snowy shirt sleeve was rolled back from the dusky arm he had raised to attract Edwin's attention. A striped silk scarf, which might have belonged to some English lady, was loosely knotted round his neck, with the

ends flying behind him. A scarlet coat, which had lost its sleeves, completed his grotesque appearance.⁹¹

Often Maori wear a comical mixture of Maori and European clothing; for example, when Tatau first visits the Vaughans he is wearing a flax mat and feathers in his hair, but ‘his appearance was, as he thought, rendered truly noble by the addition of an ordinary grey-and-white flannel shirt of English manufacture’.⁹² Some years later, when the process of assimilation is further advanced, he is attending church services, ‘his tattooed face curiously appearing above a suit of tweed’. The author adds, ‘He thinks himself quite an Englishman now’;⁹³ but she is clearly mocking such pretensions, and his tattooed face continues to mark him as ‘other’.

Not all Maori welcome the British settlers, and in a number of books there is a distinction between ‘good’ Maori, who are pro-Pakeha, and ‘bad’ Maori, who are not. As Geoffrey Trease has noted, in adventure stories from the Victorian period to the 1930s, ‘A “loyal native” is a man, dark of skin and doglike in devotion, who helps the British to govern his country. A “treacherous native” is one who does not.’⁹⁴ *Holmwood*, *Waihoura*, *Amongst the Maoris*, *Maori and Settler*, and *Under One Standard* all feature young Maori boys (or, in Kingston’s books, girls) who have been educated by missionaries, and have embraced Christianity and forsaken their traditional way of life in favour of European ways. (Claudia Marquis comments of this process that ‘Waihoura is Lucy’s empire.’⁹⁵) They befriend and assist the English settlers, thereby earning the enmity of those Maori opposed to the colonists’ presence. George in *Under One Standard* is cast out by his people and dies enveloped in an odour of sanctity, but the loyalty of the others to their Pakeha friends is rewarded. The young women, Yeda and Waihoura, are helped to escape from their heathen suitors, Matangee and Hemipo, and marry the Christian chiefs of their choice; and the young men, Marara and Jacky, are given permanent employment by the grateful Englishmen they have rescued. ‘Bad’ Maori who resist the Pakeha are suitably punished. Matangee and Hemipo are captured and Matangee is killed; Hemipo’s life, however, is spared and he becomes a Christian. The frontispiece of *Waihoura* emphasizes Maori savagery in its depiction of a fierce, dark-skinned warrior, clad only in a blanket, and carrying an axe.



Frontispiece by R. Coop (?) for *Waihoura* by W. H. G. Kingston.

In *Maori and Settler* and *Under One Standard* the ‘bad’ Maori are not individuals but the dreaded ‘Hau-Hau’ and other rebels, who have taken up arms against the colonists, and who are, as Mr Atherton points out, no better than wild animals:

These natives have no cause of complaint whatever against us. They have assembled and attacked the settlement in a treacherous manner, and without the slightest warning of their intentions. Their intention is to slay man, woman, and child without mercy, and I therefore regard them as human tigers and no more deserving of pity.⁹⁶

The natives are duly punished for their treachery: Mr Atherton and his friends kill most of the party who attack their house, and drive the survivors off in disarray, and the Hau-Hau are defeated in the military campaign that follows. The Taranaki campaign which features in *Under One Standard* also ends in the defeat of the rebellious Maori.

On the whole, however, since these texts are trying to promote emigration to New Zealand, they tend to minimize the danger posed to settlers by possible Maori hostility. In *Distant Homes*, *Holmwood*, *Waihoura*, and *Across Two Seas*, the settlers are protected from the fighting which has broken out elsewhere by the friendships they have formed with neighbouring tribes. Moreover, Captain Graham, Major Parry and Mr Pemberton are able to persuade other tribes in their vicinity not to join in the fighting by pointing out to them the advantages of supporting the British. Potential emigrants among the readers of these texts are reassured by stories in which sensible Maori accept, and indeed welcome, British rule; and intransigent natives are defeated by superior military force. Historical fiction for children written during the nineteenth and early twentieth centuries thus reflects and promotes the imperial ethos of the time by portraying New Zealand as a desirable place to live, where settlers can prosper and safely carry out their imperial obligations of taming the wilderness and spreading (British) civilization. These texts, in which the settlers are dominant and their presence is unproblematic while the indigenous people are marginalized, are, in the words of Peter Gibbons, ‘actual sites of (textual) colonization’.⁹⁷

One of the ways in which the settlers spread ‘civilization’ to the natives was through converting them to Christianity, and many of these books promote evangelization with a fervour equal to, or even greater than, that with which they espouse the imperial cause. The ‘evangelical child’ common in books of the Victorian period, who preaches salvation and temperance (and frequently dies a premature but holy death),⁹⁸ is transplanted to the colonies. Gilderdale draws attention to ‘the missionary spirit which is much in evidence in all the early books about the settlers. There is a security of faith which many might find enviable today, and a commitment to the bringing of Light into the Darkness of a heathen land.’⁹⁹ Evangelization in these Victorian and early twentieth century texts is inextricably linked with imperialism, aiming to create a society of morally sound, upright, and law-abiding citizens of both races. The conversion of Maori is central to Kingston’s *Holmwood* and *Waihoura*, and plays a significant role in *Distant Homes* and *Under One Standard*, and to a lesser extent in *Doing and Daring* and *Across Two Seas*. *Holmwood* and *Waihoura* both revolve around the conversion of a young Maori woman by a pious English family. Both Yeda and Waihoura are nursed back to health after being gravely ill

(implying the superiority of Western medical treatments) but it is their spiritual rather than their physical health which is important; as Mrs Parry observes, it would not matter if Yeda died of her illness as long as she had heard the Christian message before she expired. *Waihoura* is even more overtly religious than *Holmwood*, and Lucy devotes a great deal of time (and many pages of text) to instructing Waihoura; since, as she explains:

“In spite of their wickedness God loves the Maori people as much as He does us; their souls are of the same value in His sight as ours, and He desires that all should come to him and be saved.”¹⁰⁰

The book ends with not just Waihoura and her husband, Rahana, but also Hemipo and ‘all his people’ becoming ‘true and earnest Christians’.¹⁰¹ The Parrys and the Pembertons are rewarded for their virtuous conduct by the success of their colonial enterprises and the friendship of their Maori neighbours.

Distant Homes was based on letters Mrs Aylmer received from the wife of a clergyman who had settled in Akaroa, so predictably religion is a prominent theme in this book. The Grahams’ oldest son George is studying to be a clergyman, and important events include Lucy and Beatrice’s confirmation, and a church service on Christmas day in a raupo hut Mr Graham has built especially for that purpose. Children, as well as adults, are shown as having an important role to play in converting the natives. Lucy and Beatrice (aged thirteen and twelve at the time) learn Maori so that they can teach the native children, and Lucy is instrumental in persuading her parents to let the local tribe move their pa close to the Grahams’ house: ““Oh! Mamma, let them come. We’ll have a school, and teach the poor little children, and when George comes he’ll preach to them in the schoolroom.””¹⁰² The girls’ teaching is a success, but at first their attempts at evangelization are less fruitful:

Although the children all attended the school, and brought their parents to hear Mr Graham read prayers upon Sunday, they kept up most of their curious customs and clung to their old superstitions, perhaps all the more closely, that they saw the time was coming when they would cast them voluntarily aside, and worship the true God in purity and sincerity.¹⁰³

The arrival of a missionary ensures the speedy conversion of the natives, and a legacy from a kind benefactor provides for the construction of a permanent church, so that George will have his own parish once he is ordained.

In *Doing and Daring*, Christian conversion does not encompass whole tribes of Maori, but only one Maori boy, Edwin's friend, Whero. While most of the book is concerned with adventure rather than evangelization, the religious verse on the title page hints that the author has a more serious purpose, although this does not emerge until near the end of the book, when Whero tips the villainous Lawford out of his canoe and leaves him to drown. Edwin has not previously expressed any religious conviction, but he suffers intense anguish when he realizes he may have been an unwitting accomplice in Lawford's death, and struggles to save him: "Better to die with him than live to know I have killed him".¹⁰⁴ Although Edwin, unlike Kingston's and Aylmer's protagonists, does not deliberately seek to convert his Maori friend, Whero is stirred by Edwin's words and actions:

The overmastering feeling which prompted Edwin to say this shot from his eyes and quivered in his voice, and Whero, swayed by a force he could not understand, reaching him only by words, yielded to the influence of the light thus vibrating from soul to soul.

"Yes", he said reflectively, "there is something greater than killing, and I want the greatest things."¹⁰⁵

While Aylmer and Stredder imply that even young children can (and should) be involved in evangelization, Bedford's *Under One Standard* suggests that this is a difficult task best left to trained missionaries. Bishop Selwyn says, "It's a glorious work, but it needs heroic men to do it."¹⁰⁶ Selwyn, with his sympathy for the Maori, and his school for Maori boys in Auckland, is held up as an exemplar of the heroic men who work in this field. The results of his labours are epitomized by the saintly George, whose love of God leads him to risk his life to save his Pakeha friends. David's mentor, Folkes, is inspired by George's death to abandon his work of surveying the land in Taranaki at the centre of the dispute between Maori and settlers. As Giselle Byrnes has pointed out, 'surveyors occupied a central role in implementing the principles of colonization on the ground';¹⁰⁷ and Folkes rejects this in favour of a missionary vocation which promotes reconciliation rather than division between the races. David is inspired by Selwyn, Folkes, and the memory of George,

to become a missionary as well. Bedford has a much more realistic view than Kingston and Aylmer of the difficulties of converting the Maori, and there are no mass conversions as in their books. David's letter to his sister on the occasion of his ordination is pessimistic about his chances of success:

The Bishop is going to send me away at once to work amongst the Maoris, by my own special request. I feel the greatness of the task; I know myself all unworthy; the sanguine enthusiasm of my boyhood has forsaken me, for I have lived among Maoris, and carefully studied not only their language but their character. I have found out that boys like George are the exception, not the rule, and so I start upon my work prepared for frequent failure and disappointment, prepared also to give myself up to it body, soul and spirit.¹⁰⁸

In *Across Two Seas* the conversion of Tatau's tribe is also left to the experts. The Vaughans hold their own Sunday service for the family and their Pakeha friends, but the Maori are not invited to participate, in case, 'though, as a rule, the Maoris are not thieves, the temptation of seeing new and coveted tools and implements about might tempt some weak brothers to sin'.¹⁰⁹ Instead, Mark Vaughan asks the Bishop in Auckland to send a clergyman, which he duly does; and at the end of the book a church has been built, where 'Maories and white folk worship happily together'.¹¹⁰ The central religious conversion in *Across Two Seas* is not that of the Maori, but of Dick, the liveliest and most interesting member of the Vaughan family, whose impetuous nature is tamed through a series of moral lessons. When he flouts his older brother's authority aboard the ship bringing them to New Zealand by climbing up the rigging with a friend, the friend falls overboard and drowns. A later instance of disobedience results in Dick breaking his leg and being bedridden for several months. Through such trials, Dick is reformed, becomes a missionary, and dies a martyr's death, 'struck down as he stood, his folded hands never parted, his eyes still turned heavenwards'.¹¹¹ This picture of the pious adult Dick is in forcible contrast to the boisterous and impetuous boy of the earlier part of the book, whose enthusiasm and good-humour made him such an appealing character.

A similar transformation occurs to high-spirited Lucy in *Distant Homes*. As Kirstine Moffat has commented: 'Aylmer regards childhood as a state of disorder in which the original sins of independence, rebellion and heightened emotion must be rooted out. Her model child is a miniature adult who exhibits the adult virtues of self-restraint

and self-sacrifice.’¹¹² Lucy’s childish emotions are severely dealt with; for example, when she (quite justifiably, one feels) cries out in fright during the eruption of Mount Egmont, her mother reprimands her for being silly and ungrateful to God, and recommends that:

“next time you are in danger or fear, control your feelings and keep your wits about you, which you will only do by trusting in Him who says that “every hair of your head is numbered”.”¹¹³

On another occasion Lucy slaps her little brother for ruining her new paint box, and the author is quick to moralise: ‘This little episode showed Lucy that she must keep a guard upon her temper, and never think a little thing was of no consequence; but “watch and pray”, lest [...] she should give way before she knew what she was about.’¹¹⁴ Episodes such as these, together with the ‘higher and holier thoughts’ engendered by her confirmation, have the desired effect. Although Lucy’s transformation is not as drastic as that of Dick, by the end of the book she is no longer a wilful child but a decorous young woman devoted to teaching her native charges.

In *Across Two Seas* and *Distant Homes* the moral education of the English protagonists and the conversion of the native people go hand in hand, but the authors of *Amongst the Maoris* and *The Boy Settler* obviously see no point in trying to convert the Maori, whom they consider a dying race; they concentrate instead on the spiritual development of their English protagonists. As already noted, the theme of *Amongst the Maoris* is Jack Stanley’s desire to find and discredit the man who has ruined his father. The author ensures that child readers will be aware of the undesirability of this ambition by frequently issuing stern warnings, reinforced with appropriate Bible verses, about the dire effect Jack’s ‘unnatural desire for revenge’ has on him; throwing ‘a gloom over every happy feeling of his breast’, destroying ‘all the buoyancy of his spirit’,¹¹⁵ and preventing him from praying; ‘for between his Maker and himself there was always that barrier of sin, his desire of revenge’.¹¹⁶ Jack is the victim of the tohunga’s plan of revenge, but he does not apply this to himself, and it is only after a symbolic baptism and spiritual rebirth in the waters of the Waikato, that the discovery of Hope’s identity (and the prayers of the missionaries with whom he is staying) brings about the necessary conversion. In a chapter

significantly entitled ‘The greatest event in the life of Jack Stanley’, he abandons his plans for revenge, and embraces God. The reformation of the other sinner, Mr Maitland, is used to demonstrate the right way of atoning for one’s sins. Maitland’s remorse leads him to take the extreme measure of becoming a hermit and almost starving himself to death; but the missionary tells him he has duty to return to the world and use his influence and wealth ‘to the glory of God and the good of men’.¹¹⁷

Unlike Jack and Maitland, Sydney Bartlett in *The Boy Settler* is in no need of reformation as he is already an exemplary character, thanks to the influence of three good women – his old nurse, Patty; Mrs Falconer (the mother of one of his school-mates and of Beatrice, Sydney’s future bride); and Beatrice herself. Mrs Falconer suggests that Sydney could be like Sir Galahad, the pure-hearted knight who undertakes the quest for the Holy Grail, and this idea, together with his love for Beatrice, has a formative effect on Sydney’s life:

The thought of her and of the heavenly quest combined served as a loadstone [sic], which saved him from plunging into the many doubtful pleasures which, with siren voices, called him.

But the seed of immortal life had been sown in his heart, and though still dormant, was being slowly prepared by the trials of his present life to break forth in God’s good time into “the white flower of a blameless life”.¹¹⁸

Sydney attends church, teaches Sunday school, and persuades all the boys in his class to sign the temperance pledge. His sincerity in these pursuits is contrasted with the motives of his hypocritical aunt, who joins church groups merely to further her social climbing aspirations. When he emigrates to New Zealand, Sydney remains teetotal, and clean in mind and body, and is suitably rewarded with prosperity and the love of his Beatrice. The message of most of these books is that living a good Christian life will result not only in a heavenly reward, but in material blessings on earth. Sydney and Jack both inherit substantial properties, and the other evangelizing families flourish in their pioneering endeavours.

Another message which emerges clearly is that these benefits are available only to the adherents of the ‘right’ religion, that is, Protestantism, mainly in the form of the Anglican Church. Roman Catholicism is generally presented as silly and

superstitious, and practised only by Irish servants. Evangelization in these nineteenth and early twentieth century texts is inextricably linked with imperialism, aiming to create a society of morally sound, upright, and law-abiding citizens of both peoples, united as members of the aptly named Church of England. ‘Throughout these texts the Christian religion provides colonials with a means not only to spiritual salvation but to an ordered, controlled society which in these novels signifies imperial Britain.’¹¹⁹

In their attitudes to imperialism and evangelization, the books considered in this chapter reflect and endorse the prevailing values of the time, and they do so also in their portrayal of gender. Girls are taught from an early age not to expect the freedom their brothers enjoy, as young Madge discovers in *The Redfords*:

“Oh!” exclaimed little Madge, stopping short as they scampered round with Bernard and Charley; “Oh, I wish mama would allow me, just for once, to say “O how jolly!”

“Well, but you know you mustn’t,” said Bernard authoritatively. “You’re not to use such words; they’re only for boys.”¹²⁰

Although there are occasional exceptions, as in *Across Two Seas* where Phil learns to cook and Joss learns to shoot, in most of these texts there is a clear division between the roles assigned to male and female characters. In *Distant Homes*, for example, Tom is allowed to help build the house and accompany his father on many expeditions. Lucy, a lively tomboy, who prefers ‘her pony and a large dog, the boat on the river, and animals left in her keeping by her absent brothers to any lesson her governess could put before her’,¹²¹ wants to join Tom and her father on some of their excursions; but Tom points out to her that, ““Girls are not fit for rough work””, so she is left behind to mend Tom’s clothes.¹²² Gradually rebellious Lucy is transformed into a genteel and obedient young lady, like her sedate and colourless sister Beatrice, whose ‘gentleness, and readiness to do anything her brothers wanted’ is praised by the author.¹²³ Tom leaves home for an adventurous life in the navy, but Lucy has to be content with domestic duties, teaching the native children, and dabbling in the ladylike pursuits of playing the piano and painting in water colours.

This pattern is repeated in the other texts. While boys are shown having adventures (for example, trekking through the bush in *Amongst the Maori*, rescuing people in *Doing and Daring*, and fighting the Maori rebels in *Maori and Settler*), or as engaged in vigorous activities such as clearing land, planting crops, and building houses and bridges, their sisters are largely confined to teaching, domestic duties, and artistic endeavours. Emily in *Holmwood* and Lucy in *Waihouora* spend their time tending their houses, gardens and poultry and teaching their Maori charges (although both have an adventure when they are kidnapped). In *The Redfords*, Mr Redford explains the distinction between boys' and girls' roles when he and his sons are building extensions to their house:

“You won’t leave us girls much to do, papa!” said Maud laughing. “We must really be allowed to do something!”

“And don’t you do a great deal, dear?” said Mr. Redford. “Could we work so well if we had to cook our own food and look after the house?”¹²⁴

While the boys engage in the physical labour of building the walls and chimney, the girls decorate the inside of the house with pictures cut from magazines. When the house is finished, the boys work outside on the farm, and Maud runs the household and dairy, teaches her younger siblings, and entertains the family and visitors by playing the piano and singing.

In *Maori and Settler*, Wilfrid also declines his sister Marion’s offer of help in building their house and advises her to learn cooking so that she can do the housekeeping. Marion is offered a chance to move outside the domestic sphere when Mr Atherton teaches her to shoot. However, she never actually fires a shot, even when the house is attacked, preferring to leave the shooting to the men of the party, and she is happy to return to domesticity once the scare is over. Joss in *Across Two Seas* does not put her shooting ability into practice either. As with Lucy in *Distant Homes*, tomboyish Joss is contrasted with her less robust sister, Juliet, who prefers writing poetry to going out on the farm. The possibility that the female authors of these texts are subverting conventional female roles by allowing Lucy, Marion and Joss to challenge the status quo is undermined by the fact that their attempts are ultimately unsuccessful. ‘All heroines in these works who chafe against gender

injustice eventually accept patriarchally-dominated domestication, and girl readers are encouraged to enjoy vicariously their rebellious behaviour but not to imitate it.¹²⁵

The reward for young women who accept domestication is marriage and a home of their own; and Maud, Marion and Juliet (though not capable Joss) are all married by the end of their respective stories. Although their husbands may not seem particularly romantic (Mr Harkom and Mr Atherton are both considerably older than their young brides, and George has only one arm), this is immaterial to the benefits they gain. According to Beets, 'Early New Zealand-set children's texts emphasise marriage as not only a means to patriarchal safety and provision, but as a magic ceremony which creates those revered objects, colonial mothers'.¹²⁶ Mothers in nearly all of these texts are 'colonial House Angels, hardworking, morally perfect, and deeply respected'.¹²⁷ They handle with equanimity the transition from their comfortable lives in England to the very different conditions in New Zealand; run their households and their families with enviable ease; dispense religious instruction and moral advice, and foster music and reading. These virtues are thrown into relief by the few mothers who do not live up to this ideal. Mrs Redford's main characteristic is her propensity to faint at moments of stress, and her role devolves on to Maud, who is nicknamed 'old mother' by her younger siblings. In *Holmwood* and *Doing and Daring*, where the mother is absent through death, the maternal role also falls on the eldest daughter. Mary Godwin in *Under One Standard* is unfitted for pioneering life and relies heavily on her cousin Margaret, who has all the virtues of a colonial mother (and becomes one through her marriage to Folkes). No matter how revered colonial mothers may be, however, their husbands (or in the case of widowed Mrs Vaughan, her eldest son) are still expected to be the heads of their households. Two colonial fathers, Mr Redford and Mr Renshaw, who shirk their family responsibilities while in England through their absorption in their work, are changed by their settler experience and resume their rightful roles. Traditional Victorian family values are upheld, even (or especially) in the colonies.

The books discussed in this chapter are, of course, works of fiction, and their representation of the orderly creation of miniature Englands, where virtuous middle-class families live amicably with their Maori neighbours as loyal subjects of the

Empire, is at variance with the reality of New Zealand's pioneering history. Nevertheless, they accurately reflect the values of the time (or, at least, the values of the middle-class, English, Anglican authors of these books), and offer an insight into the ideologies which inspired so many British emigrants to make new lives for themselves on the other side of the world. *Distant Homes* provided a model for most of the Victorian emigrant novels, and Kirstine Moffat's comments on that book are equally applicable to all of the texts in this chapter:

For all its New Zealand setting and attempt at evoking the world of the child, *Distant Homes* is explicitly Anglo-centric, designed to reinforce the cultural message of its day: the glories of the British Empire, the need for the civilizing influence of European mission, and the rewards of obedience to a paternalistic family hierarchy. Like its creator, this is a tale of distant lands which never leaves the British shore.¹²⁸

Later novels about immigration to New Zealand were written by authors who live in this country, rather than in Britain. They were also written many years after the Victorian period in which they are set, and therefore present a different picture of immigration. These texts form the subject of the next chapter.

¹ J. E. Aylmer, *Distant Home: The Graham Family in New Zealand*, illus. by J. Jackson (London: Griffith, Farran, Browne, 1862), p.176.

² King, p.169.

³ King, p.175.

⁴ Seamus Deane, 'Imperialism/Nationalism', in *Critical Terms for Literary Study*, ed. by Frank Lentricchia and Thomas McLaughlin, 2nd edn (Chicago: University of Chicago Press, 1995), pp.354-368 (p.355).

⁵ Deane, p.254.

⁶ Gilderdale, *A Sea Change*, p.2.

⁷ J. E. Aylmer, W. H. G. Kingston, G. A. Henty, E. S. Elwell and Emilia Marryat are known to have been English, and the other authors all write about English protagonists, suggesting that they are also English.

⁸ Bradford, 'Saved by the Word', p.90.

⁹ Aylmer, p.119.

¹⁰ Kirstine Moffat, 'A Tale of Distant Lands which Never Leaves the Shore' (unpublished paper presented at a symposium on 'The Place of the Child in Children's Literature', University of Auckland, December 2005).

¹¹ Aylmer, p.114.

¹² Ringer, p.14.

¹³ Aylmer, p.38.

¹⁴ Kingston, William Henry Giles, *Holmwood; or The New Zealand Settler*, illus. by J. Jackson (London: Griffith & Farran, 1868) [1887], title page.

¹⁵ Ringer, p.14.

¹⁶ Kingston, *Holmwood*, p.30.

¹⁷ Kingston, *Holmwood*, p.32.

¹⁸ Kingston, *Holmwood*, p.64.

¹⁹ Kingston, William Henry Giles, *Waihoura, or The New Zealand Girl*, illus unknown (London: Gall & Inglis, 1873) [1905], p.8.

²⁰ Kingston, *Waihoura*, p.71.

²¹ Kingston, *Waihoura*, p.69.

²² Kingston, *Waihoura*, p.87. This phrase echoes the description of the Maori chief Duaterra in John Lyddiard Nicholas's *Narrative of a Voyage to New Zealand, performed in the Years 1814 and 1815* (London: James Black, 1817), vol.1, p.24. The description of Duaterra's complexion as 'not darker than that of the natives of Spain or Portugal' was applied by Kingston to Waihoura: 'Her complexion was much fairer than that of any of her companions, scarcely darker, indeed, than a Spanish or Italian brunette. No tattoo marks disfigured her lips or chin.' (p.19).

²³ Kingston, *Waihoura*, p. 127 and p.126.

²⁴ *Renata's Journey* (translated, edited and annotated by Helen Hogan) records a journey made by Renata Kawepo with Bishop Selwyn and his companions in 1843. It took the party nearly two months to travel from Auckland to Wellington, even though some of the journey was by canoe; and it is clear that the journey was arduous and difficult. As recently as September 2008, it took cricketer Chris Cairns three weeks (averaging 30 kilometres a day) to walk from Wellington to Auckland along State Highway 1 on a charity walk. Since Jack and his companions were tramping through virgin bush and having to set up camp and catch and cook their food every day, the trip would be much more onerous and of much longer duration than the text indicates.

²⁵ Claudia Marquis, 'Romancing the Home: Gender, Empire and the South Pacific', in *Girls, Boys, Books, Toys: Gender in Children's Literature and Culture*, ed. by Beverly Lyon Clark and Margaret R. Higonnet (Baltimore: Johns Hopkins University Press, 1999), pp. 53-67 (p.57).

²⁶ Emilia Marryat, *Amongst the Maoris; A Book of Adventure*, illus. by Gunston (London: Warne, 1874), p.249.

²⁷ Marryat, p.138.

²⁸ Marryat, p.7.

²⁹ Marryat, p.19.

³⁰ Marryat, p.40.

³¹ Marryat, p.168.

³² Marryat, p.366.

³³ Elaine Showalter, *Sexual Anarchy: Gender and Culture at the Fin de Siècle* (New York: Viking, 1990), p.81.

³⁴ Ernest Simeon Elwell, *The Boy Colonists; or Eight Years of Colonial Life in Otago, New Zealand* (London: Simpkin, Marshall, 1878), Introduction. (Page not numbered).

³⁵ Elwell, p.8.

³⁶ Elwell, p.24.

³⁷ Elwell, p.116.

³⁸ Elwell, p.101.

³⁹ Mrs George Cupples, *The Redfords, an Emigrant Story*, illus. unknown (London: Blackie, 1886), p.101.

⁴⁰ Cupples, p.119.

⁴¹ Cupples, 123.

⁴² Cupples, p.54.

⁴³ Cupples, p.64.

⁴⁴ Cupples, p.52.

⁴⁵ Humphrey Carpenter and Mari Prichard, *The Oxford Companion to Children's Literature* (Oxford: Oxford University Press, 1984), p.245.

⁴⁶ Victor Watson, ed., *The Cambridge Guide to Children's Books in English* (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 2001), p.329.

⁴⁷ G. A. Henty, *Maori and Settler: A Story of the New Zealand War*, illus. by Alfred Pearse (London: Blackie and Son, 1891 [1911], p.155.

⁴⁸ Henty, p.352.

⁴⁹ Henty, p.197.

⁵⁰ H. A. Forde, *Across Two Seas*, illus. unknown (London: Wells Gardner Darton, 1894), p.12.

⁵¹ Entry on Bishop Patteson in the *Dictionary of New Zealand Biography*, www.dnsb.govt.nz Retrieved 6 May 2009.

⁵² The illustrator is not mentioned on the title page but the five full-page black and white drawings are signed A. Rhind. There is also a small sketch on the half-title page.

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- ⁵³ Eleanor Stredder, *Doing and Daring: A New Zealand Story*, illus. by A Rhind (London: Nelson, 1899), p.10.
- ⁵⁴ Stredder, p.10.
- ⁵⁵ 'Appended are a few extracts. They may be a little fragmentary but they are true to life.' Storer, p.198.
- ⁵⁶ Storer, p.99.
- ⁵⁷ H. Louisa Bedford, *Under One Standard or The Touch that Makes Us Kin: A Story of the Time of the Maori War*, illus by Harold Piffard (London: Society for Promoting Christian Knowledge, 1916), p.103.
- ⁵⁸ Bedford, p.180.
- ⁵⁹ Bedford, p.69.
- ⁶⁰ Bedford, p.189.
- ⁶¹ Lady Martin, *Our Maoris* (London: Society for Promoting Christian Knowledge, 1884), p.159.
- ⁶² Martin, p.160.
- ⁶³ Throughout *Under One Standard*, George refers to Bishop Selwyn as 'Chem father'. This obviously derives from Bedford's misreading of an anecdote related by Lady Martin about a Melanesian boy converted to Christianity by Bishop Selwyn. 'One day he turned to the Bishop with a shy smile on his face, and said in broken English, giving his old heathen father's name: "Chem father, Bishop father, God father."' [Martin, p.197.] Chem is the name of the boy's father, not, as Bedford has it, another name for the Bishop.
- ⁶⁴ Jacqueline Beets, 'Girls and Boys Come Out to Stay: Ideological Formations in New Zealand-set Children's Fiction 1862-1917' (unpublished doctoral thesis, Massey University, 2003), p.304.
- ⁶⁵ Beets, p.305.
- ⁶⁶ Jeffrey Richards, ed., *Imperialism and Juvenile Literature* (Manchester: Manchester University Press, 1989), p.2.
- ⁶⁷ Richards, p.3.
- ⁶⁸ Aylmer, p.6.
- ⁶⁹ Henty, p.18.
- ⁷⁰ Aylmer, p.162.
- ⁷¹ Henty, p.205.
- ⁷² Katherine Raine, 'Domesticating the Land: Colonial Womens' Gardening', in *Fragments: New Zealand Social and Cultural History*, ed. by Bronwyn Dalley and Bronwyn Labrum, (Auckland: Auckland University Press, 2000), pp.75-96 (p.78).
- ⁷³ Raine, p.91.
- ⁷⁴ Raine, p.89.
- ⁷⁵ Marryat, p.98.
- ⁷⁶ Aylmer, p.14.
- ⁷⁷ Aylmer, p.127.
- ⁷⁸ Aylmer, p.118.
- ⁷⁹ Forde, p.138.
- ⁸⁰ Beets, p.106.
- ⁸¹ Chris Tiffin and Alan Lawson, 'Introduction: The Textuality of Empire', in *De-scribing Empire: Post-Colonialism and Textuality*, ed. by Chris Tiffin and Alan Lawson (London: Routledge, 1994), pp.1-11 (p.5).
- ⁸² Marryat, p.256.
- ⁸³ Storer, p.133.
- ⁸⁴ Stredder, p.242.
- ⁸⁵ Aylmer, p.65.
- ⁸⁶ Aylmer, p.119.
- ⁸⁷ Forde, p.99.
- ⁸⁸ Forde, p.90.
- ⁸⁹ Forde, p.100.
- ⁹⁰ Marryat, p.68.
- ⁹¹ Stredder, p.15.
- ⁹² Forde, p.96.
- ⁹³ Forde, p.186.

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- ⁹⁴ Geoffrey Trease, 'The Revolution in Children's Literature', in *The Thorny Paradise: Writers on Writing for Children* ed. by Edward Blishen (Harmondsworth: Penguin, 1975), pp.13-24 (p.14).
- ⁹⁵ Marquis, p.65.
- ⁹⁶ Henty, p.251.
- ⁹⁷ Peter Gibbons, 'Cultural Colonization and National Identity', *New Zealand Journal of History*, 36,1 (2002) , pp.5-15 (p.14).
- ⁹⁸ Gillian Avery, *Childhood's Pattern: A Study of the Heroes and Heroines of Children's Fiction 1770-1950* (London: Hodder and Stoughton, 1975), p.92.
- ⁹⁹ Gilderdale, *A Sea Change*, p.56.
- ¹⁰⁰ Kingston, *Waihoua*, p.47.
- ¹⁰¹ Kingston, *Waihoua*, p.127.
- ¹⁰² Aylmer, p.123.
- ¹⁰³ Aylmer, p.149.
- ¹⁰⁴ Stredder, p.286.
- ¹⁰⁵ Stredder, p.289.
- ¹⁰⁶ Bedford, p.122.
- ¹⁰⁷ Giselle Byrnes, 'Surveying Space: Constructing the Colonial Landscape', in *Fragments: New Zealand Social and Cultural History*, ed. by Bronwyn Dalley and Bronwyn Labrum (Auckland: Auckland University Press, 2000), pp.55-74 (p.60).
- ¹⁰⁸ Bedford, p.217.
- ¹⁰⁹ Forde, p.101.
- ¹¹⁰ Forde, p.186.
- ¹¹¹ Forde, p.182.
- ¹¹² Moffat.
- ¹¹³ Aylmer, p.27.
- ¹¹⁴ Aylmer, p.172.
- ¹¹⁵ Marryat, p.54.
- ¹¹⁶ Marryat, p.66.
- ¹¹⁷ Marryat, p.364.
- ¹¹⁸ Storer, p.92.
- ¹¹⁹ Beets, 184.
- ¹²⁰ Cupples, p.61.
- ¹²¹ Aylmer, p.7.
- ¹²² Aylmer, p.53.
- ¹²³ Aylmer, p.7.
- ¹²⁴ Cupples, p.68.
- ¹²⁵ Beets, 236.
- ¹²⁶ Beets, 249.
- ¹²⁷ Beets, 249.
- ¹²⁸ Moffat.

CHAPTER FIVE
YOUNG SETTLERS: IMMIGRANT NOVELS BY TWENTIETH AND TWENTY-
FIRST CENTURY AUTHORS.

It is all so Different here. It seems we must learn anew even the most basic arts of Living.¹

The authors of books about immigration to New Zealand published during the nineteenth and early twentieth centuries lived in England, and in most cases had no first hand knowledge of New Zealand, so their descriptions of the landscape and the country's indigenous inhabitants were often unreliable. Their books were, however, written soon after the events they described, so they evoke the culture, values and language of the time. The reverse is true of later historical novels – the authors are familiar with New Zealand's geography and climate, but they are removed as effectively by the distance of time from the period they are writing about as the earlier writers were removed by geographical distance from the physical setting of their books. To compensate for this, authors of historical novels published since the 1950s have generally engaged in extensive research to provide an accurate historical background. The novels written during the Victorian period were not as concerned with historical accuracy, since they were intended mainly as adventure stories which advanced the imperialistic and evangelical ideologies of the time. Some of the later books, such as *Maori Jack's Monster*, *Fire in the Bracken*, and *The Lost Children*, are also adventure stories which use the historical background simply as the setting for exciting exploits of dubious credibility. The majority, however, attempt to provide an authentic re-creation of the period in which they are set, and often supply information on the historical basis of the story, including glossaries, bibliographies, maps and photographs. The authors of the more recent books know what has happened in New Zealand since the early settler days, so do not have the same feeling as the Victorian writers of New Zealand as an exciting place with unlimited potential. Their knowledge of subsequent events and societal changes also colours the way they interpret historical events in their novels.

There is a distinct break between the Victorian and early twentieth century novels and the more recent books. After Bedford's *Under One Standard*, almost twenty years

elapsed before the publication of another historical novel for children about the early settler period. Edith Howes' *Young Pioneers* was published in 1934, and it is very different from the earlier books in style and approach. The protagonists are younger; the plot is a straight-forward adventure story with the emphasis on the children's escapades rather than the process of settling in a new land; and there is no evangelizing – the message of the book is environmental rather than religious. Howes was one of the most popular and prolific New Zealand children's authors of the early twentieth century, and achieved international success with her fantasy stories, notably *The Cradle Ship* (1916), a fairy story which introduced children to the facts of life. Although the style of much of her work is dated, suffering, as it does, from 'the sentimental "flower fairy" syndrome"',² the factual accuracy of her books, based on meticulous observation and research, and her versatility as the writer of both fantasies and some of this country's first indigenous adventure stories, ensure that, as Gilderdale asserts, she 'remains one of the most significant writers of children's literature in New Zealand'.³ *Young Pioneers* is her only work of historical fiction, and it shares both the exciting plot of her adventure fiction and the fascination with nature of her fantasy stories.

Young Pioneers is one of the 'Whitcombe's Story Books' series, intended, according to the title page, 'for ages 10 to 12 years', and there is a glossary of difficult words at the end to assist young readers. The story opens in 1850, when the two protagonists, Jo (Josephine) Forsyth and her brother Jack, aged nine and eight, are about to set sail for New Zealand with their parents and two younger siblings. No reason is given for their emigration, and the voyage is treated succinctly, but with sufficient detail to give an impression of shipboard life. Mrs Forsyth does not enjoy it: 'It was hard for her to grow accustomed to the smells of a crowded sailing vessel; the strange food; the cramped quarters, hemmed in by strangers; and the difficulty of keeping four children well and properly cared for under such conditions.'⁴ The children, however, have a different perspective:

Winds and storms, calms and tiresome waiting, cold and heat, and cold again, sea-birds and fishes, sharks and porpoises, and yes, a great whale spouting in the distance! Days and weeks and months, until it seemed that the world was all water and the ship would go sailing on forever.⁵

It is significant that the voyage is described in terms of the birds and fishes the children see on the way, as on arrival in the rudimentary settlement of Oteputi (later Dunedin), there is much attention paid to the flora and fauna of the new land. The children explore the bush, beach and creeks, and later the mountains in the hinterland, and Howes provides details of the plants and birds they encounter, based on her own observations and therefore far more reliable than the often fanciful descriptions of earlier writers. The Forsyths buy a bush-clad hill, and build an environmentally friendly house from living trees with flax and grass woven between and a thatched roof; quite the opposite of the replica English homesteads and landscapes created by settlers in the earlier books (although described in English terms, such as ‘thatched’, ‘forest’, and ‘bower’):

There it stood, rustic and green-thatched and beautiful, with flowering branches springing from its walls, framing its window-openings, overhanging its doorway. Softly round it grew the bush, still and exquisite, shadowed with the dusk of early evening. A forest house, it was a bower in the forest, formed from the forest itself.⁶

Young Pioneers also has a message about the need to conserve native wildlife. At first the children shoot birds for food, or to sell to overseas collectors, but by the end of the book they have decided to study native birds rather than kill them, and are planning to write and illustrate a bird book.

Howes conveys a convincing picture of the physical landscape, but pays less attention to creating an authentic feeling for the historical setting. Little is said about the process of establishing the new settlement and breaking in the land, possibly because the perspective is that of Jo and Jack, who are more interested in playing and exploring than in the work of the adult settlers. A mere six paragraphs are devoted to the first few years of the Forsyths’ new life, and although these begin ‘Living was not easy in the new settlement’,⁷ the ensuing description is of an idyllic lifestyle, with plenty of food, a village ‘like one friendly family’, and plenty of time for the children to play. ‘So three years went swiftly and happily past’,⁸ and the stage is set for the adventure which takes up the remainder of the book: Mr Forsyth’s disappearance on a gold-prospecting trip and his discovery by Jo and Jack. Howes occasionally uses

prolepsis to give an historical context; for example, she includes references to how things will look in the future:

It all looked very wild, very strange, very unlike Home; and they could not know that a steeped city, beautiful Dunedin, should arise here in a few short years, a city reared by the steadfast toil of those who sat about them, with faces turned like theirs to the new land and all its unknown chances.⁹

The plot is reliant on fortunate coincidences, such as the children's discovery, on the same day, of both their missing father and a fortune in gold nuggets (seven years before the Otago gold rushes), but it moves along at a brisk pace. Jo and Jack are likeable protagonists, who enjoy an enviable independence and freedom, though it does seem unlikely that any parent would allow an eleven and a twelve-year old to set off alone on an extended expedition into the mountains to hunt for moa bones, armed with bows and arrows and tomahawks.

Another eighteen years elapsed before the publication of *Maori Jack's Monster* (1956) by Frank Crisp, a melodramatic yarn revolving around the mystery of a missing ship, the *Sacramento Valley*; with a fast-paced plot which races through murder, shipwreck, lost treasure, an evil tohunga, and more, to a dramatic and violent climax. Young Davey, working for his stepfather in a Sydney hotel, is given the *Sacramento Valley's* logbook by a dying sailor, and stows away on a ship for New Zealand in the hope of solving the mystery of its disappearance. He finds work on a farm in Northland with a kindly couple and their daughter, Janet. He becomes friendly with Maori Jack, a pakeha who has been made tohunga of the local Ngapuhi tribe because he is able to summon a legendary sea monster (which is, in fact, a whale which responds to the call of a conch shell). Maori Jack is popular with the Pakeha settlers because he has stopped the Ngapuhi raids, and persuaded them to exchange cannibalism for farming. Davey finds the wreck of the *Sacramento Valley* and accidentally discovers that the treasure it carried, ten thousand gold sovereigns, is hidden inside the Wooden Head, a Maori idol near the Ngapuhi burial ground. He tells Maori Jack, who is then revealed to be the boatswain of the *Sacramento Valley*, responsible for murdering several of the passengers and crew. Jack chops down the Wooden Head, and when the chief, his blood-brother Pekapeka, tries to stop him committing this sacrilege, Jack shoots him. Janet is captured by the Ngapuhi who,

incited by their former tohunga, the sinister Te Uhi, are eager to avenge the death of their chief. Jack plans to escape with the gold, but at the last moment he relents, throws the Wooden Head with its treasure into the sea, and saves Janet's life by fighting Te Uhi. Both Te Uhi and Jack are killed, and Davey gives up treasure hunting, settles down to farming, and marries Janet.

The plot may be far-fetched and the characters not altogether convincing (particularly Maori Jack's transformation from cold-blooded murderer to benevolent leader and back again), but the historical setting of *Maori Jack's Monster* is obviously well-researched. The early chapters provide a vivid picture of the bustling settlement of Sydney Town and the waterfront hotel where Davey lives. At times the amount of detail given is almost overwhelming, as in Davey's first impression of Auckland:

Here in this one street, crammed together higgledy-piggledy, was a corn merchant's office, a rickety hotel, a barber's shop, an eating-house, a sly grogshop, a butcher's, bootmaker's, saddler's, bookseller's, draper's, grocer's, baker's, ironmonger's and many more, all mixed up with nondescript huts, tents, humpies, and shanties galore. And the people in the street were just as various and strange – long-haired timber-getters and saw-millers from the bush, dressed in coloured shirts and knee-boots, farmers and sailors of all nationalities, women with bustles and beribboned bonnets, gentlemen in chimney-pot hats and stove-pipe trousers.¹⁰

In other places, the text is enlivened by the author's use of colourful imagery: 'The half-caste was dark-faced, fat as butter, with a smile which gleamed like a silver dollar on a chimney-sweep's paw', and 'Tears as sharp as chisels gouged furrows on his ravaged face'.¹¹

The Emigrants (1963) by Helen Sandall and Elizabeth Henniker Heaton, is unusual in that the focus of the story is not so much on pioneer life in New Zealand, as on the actual process of getting to this country. It is not until two thirds of the way through the book that the emigrants arrive in New Zealand; three chapters are about preparing to leave, nine on shipboard life, and only six of the eighteen chapters deal with their life in the new country. The emigrants of the title are Doctor Barnet, his delicate wife Emily, and their family – Frank (seventeen), Sibella (sixteen), Paul (ten), Sally (five) and Johnny (two) – and their maid, Martha. No specific reason is given for leaving England – Doctor Barnet simply informs the children that they are going to New

Zealand without saying why – but probably there is a financial motive, as it is mentioned in passing that the doctor's patients are too poor to pay him much in 'this hard year of 1850.'¹² The family have no wish to rough it as pioneers, and, on advice from a relative, they arrange to rent a house in Auckland, as it is a flourishing centre and has a school. The doctor's opinion of its probable cultural life is indicated in his response to Sibella's request to take her harpsichord; "Certainly not, Sibella. Even if Handel did once play upon it, we shall have no use for it in New Zealand."¹³ In fact, the doctor insists that only useful things can be taken with them, so preparations for the voyage involve the sale of many precious possessions.

Doctor Barnet is engaged as ship's surgeon on the *Lady Jane*, on a three month trip to New Zealand via South America. Like Mrs Renshaw in *Maori and Settler*, Mrs Barnet comments on what a pleasant time the voyage has been; with more reason, for there has been none of the murder and mayhem which characterized the journey in the earlier book. True, the ship weathers several storms, a close encounter with an iceberg, and a short-lived mutiny by the crew. However, thanks to Doctor Barnet and his insistence on hygiene and the virtues of eating raw onions (he has thoughtfully brought several sacks of them in his personal luggage), there are no deaths on board, and the passengers arrive at their destination not only fitter, after their mandatory scrubbing of the bunks and floors and twenty laps around the deck each day, but also better educated. The doctor institutes lessons for the children, taught by Sibella, and classes in reading and writing for the adult steerage passengers. 'The doctor pointed out that it might make all the difference to their new life if they mastered these new skills.'¹⁴

On arrival in New Zealand, the family quickly settles down. Dr Barnet sets up practice, Sibella teaches at the local school, and Frank goes north to establish a farm. The final chapters are a series of set-pieces rather than a continuous narrative – a trip through the bush, a lesson in baking scones in a camp oven, and a visit to a Maori market – all of which help to create a sense of the historical and physical setting.



Illustration by Jane Paton for *The Emigrants* by Helen Sandall and Elizabeth Henniker Heaton , p.158.

Much of the narrative is told from the viewpoint of Sibella. At the outset, she is bored with her life in England: “‘What’s the point of arranging flowers and counting linen, and going to call on dull people I don’t want to see, and sewing pretty clothes for Johnny to throw his food over? It’s all so *pointless!*’”¹⁵ Her hope that her new life in New Zealand will be ‘something out of the ordinary, and worth doing’¹⁶ is realized when she becomes a teacher, and falls in love with Tony, a fellow emigrant who has bought land north of Auckland. The book ends with their wedding, and the two young people (aged eighteen and nineteen) set off optimistically to live in a two-roomed hut in the bush. There is no indication of how Sibella, who has always had her mother and a maid to help with the housework, will cope with the isolation and hardships of her new life.

Elsie Locke’s *The Runaway Settlers* (1965), possibly the best-known New Zealand settler novel for children, is almost a manual on how to cope in such a situation. Mrs Small (called Mrs Phipps for most of the book), who brings her five younger children to New Zealand to escape from their drunken and abusive father in Australia, is practical, hard-working, and equal to any challenge; be it setting up home in a derelict cottage, confronting her employer, Judge Cracroft Wilson, about his treatment of her

sons, or taking a herd of cattle overland to the West Coast. Thanks to her energy and determination, her family, who arrive in Lyttleton with nothing, have within a few years set up a flourishing market garden, bought grazing leases and stocked them with cattle, and acquired several boats to transport all their produce. Although they have a number of setbacks – their first boat is burnt, some of their cattle are stolen, and Bill, the eldest son, loses all his possessions when he goes prospecting for gold – there is never any doubt that they will survive and prosper.

Their success is not simply a plot device, however, as the story of the Smalls is true, and Locke based the narrative on extensive research, both written records, and interviews with Mary Small's surviving grandchildren. She also steeped herself in the history of the time: 'Before I began writing I read many old newspapers, books, diaries and documents, and I looked at maps and sketches, until I felt as if I was living in those times and places. [...] I also talked with people who could tell me about early days around Lyttleton Harbour, Cashmere, and the Berrima district of New South Wales.'¹⁷ *The Runaway Settlers* therefore sets out to give an accurate and authentic account of the pioneering days of early Canterbury, which focuses on the domestic life of one family but sets it in the context of local affairs (the growth of the Governors Bay settlement), and national events (the Otago and West Coast gold rushes). Locke also has first-hand knowledge of the physical setting, and provides exact details of the geographical features, vegetation, and bird-life encountered by the Smalls, both in Governors Bay, and on the hazardous trek to the West Coast. Nevertheless, the factual background does not impede the narrative unduly, and, as Fitzgibbon notes, 'the vigour and liveliness of this pioneering epic make it a New Zealand children's classic.'¹⁸ *The Runaway Settlers* is not only Locke's most popular book, but the most widely-read New Zealand settler story, which has remained almost continuously in print since 1965 and been translated into other languages.

Fire in the Bracken by S.C. George (1966) appeared a year after *The Runaway Settlers*, but it harks back to the style of earlier books, as Locke has noted in her brief survey of New Zealand historical fiction:

This skilled English writer found 'material' in New Zealand for a fast-moving tale in the Henty/Tracy tradition. [...] Jim Holland jumps ship in 1862 and the

murdering convict Despard is his evil incubus, but there are good settlers and good goldminers (in a goldfield as yet undiscovered by Phil May); and after a little war (not exactly recorded by Keith Sinclair) and various rescues and gallant fighting, Jim is the main instrument in making peace.¹⁹

As Locke's summary indicates, the author is not overly concerned with historical accuracy, and the plot moves at break-neck speed from one dramatic incident to another. Jim, escaping from his ship with its brutal skipper in Auckland harbour in 1862, is kidnapped by Despard, an escaped convict, but manages to give him the slip with the help of a Maori boy, Tiapora. Jim goes to live with a local farmer, but his peaceful existence is disrupted by the return of Despard. Subsequent adventures include gold prospecting (which will be discussed in Chapter Seven) and involvement in a war between Maori and settlers, incited by Despard (which will be discussed in Chapter Six). When the conflict is over, Despard manages to recapture Jim and tries to hang him, but accidentally kills himself instead. With his nemesis gone, Jim becomes a prosperous farmer and is eventually appointed 'Advisor of Maori Affairs to the Government.'

Fire in the Bracken is one of the 'New Horizon Series', which, according to the dust jacket, 'combines a simplicity of style and convincing characters and situations with a variety of historical and present day backgrounds'.²⁰ However, the historical situations are melodramatic rather than convincing, and the author has made little attempt at accuracy. Tiapora catches rainbow trout in a river teeming with the fish in 1862, even though trout were not released in North Island rivers until the late 1870s; and there are convicts in chains imprisoned in fictitious hulks in Auckland harbour. Maori words are used incorrectly; for example, a song of defiance is described as a *puha* and carvings are called *totara*.²¹ Characterisation is also less than convincing and the characters tend to be stereotypes. Despard could not be mistaken for anything other than a villain:

I have never gazed upon a more brutal face. The close-cropped hair, the parchment-like skin drawn tight over a simian skull, the receding brow and projecting jaw under a mouth full of dirty and broken teeth, the close-set furtive eyes and big twisted nose, the cauliflower ear, the thick neck and hairy chest – all these were marks of the brute.²²

In complete contrast to *Fire in the Bracken, They Came to Cook Strait* (1966) by David Jensen keeps, according to the author's Postscript, 'as close as possible to the known facts of history'.²³ The book, which was originally published as a serial in Part IV of the *School Journal*, and reprinted in revised form, is based on a real event, the death of four stockmen at the Wairau Bar in September 1840. It is not known whether they drowned, or whether they were killed (and, Jensen speculates, possibly eaten) by Maori, and the author's considerable research has been unable to solve the mystery:

I have not been able to find any better account of what really happened at the Wairau River mouth on 28 September 1840 than those of E. J. Wakefield and M. Murphy, the police magistrate, though I have searched for clues among early newspapers, letters, and manuscripts in the Alexander Turnbull Library, the New Zealand Government Archives, and other collections.²⁴

Jensen's research includes sailing to Port Underwood and across the Wairau Bar, and interviewing the descendants of many of the people who appear in the story. He appends brief biographies of 'Real Persons Mentioned in the Story' (which shows that almost all of the characters in the story are real), as well as a list of 'Other Books to Read'.

They Came to Cook Strait describes an actual attempt to establish a cattle farm in the Wairau Valley on land supposedly bought by a Captain Blenkinsopp from Te Rauparaha in 1832. An Australian solicitor, Frederick Unwin, bought the land from Blenkinsopp, and in 1840 sent a party of stockmen, their families, and thirty-two head of cattle, to start a farm. The settlers stayed at John Guard's whaling station at Kakapo Bay in Port Underwood while they cleared land in the Wairau Valley. Te Rauparaha disputed their right to the land and it is likely that there would have been trouble had the settlement proceeded. However, after the death of the four stockmen, the enterprise was abandoned, and Unwin's claim was subsequently disallowed by the Land Commissioner. The story is told from the viewpoint of one of the few fictional characters, Dick, an orphan who lives with the family of one of the Australian stockmen, and accompanies them to New Zealand to help with the cattle. At Port Underwood, he rapidly makes friends with Kahu and Kiri, who are the children of a Pakeha whaler and his Maori wife. The neatness and cleanliness of their house and its inhabitants are emphasised, in contrast to the depiction of the shore

whaling stations as rough and unsavoury places in the books discussed in Chapter Three. This is mirrored in the illustration by Russell Clark (though it is unusual that the children are not wearing European dress like their parents).



Illustration by Russell Clark for *They Came to Cook Strait* by David Jensen, p.53.

When the stockmen are killed, most of their wives and children return to Australia, but Dick decides to stay in New Zealand, and is given a job on a coastal trading ship by Jerningham Wakefield, trading with the Maori for food to supply the fledgling New Zealand Company settlements. Although the attempted settlement of the Wairau Plains does not succeed, the expedition is not a complete failure for Dick, as it gives him the opportunity of an exciting new life in a new country:

Dick, pulling steadily towards the schooner, could feel a mixture of sadness and good spirits in himself. Something had come to an end when the four stockmen were drowned or killed at the Wairau bar, but not everything. Life still went on, no matter what happened, and for Dick it was just beginning.²⁵

Captain John Niven (1972) is also firmly based on real characters and events, being in fact a biographical novel about the eventful life of Captain John Bollons, whom the author, Bernard Fergusson (the former Governor-General of New Zealand), knew as a boy. The author and his family frequently sailed with Bollons when he was captain of the New Zealand Government steamer *Tutanekai*, and Fergusson describes him as 'by far the greatest hero of my boyhood'.²⁶ Bollons' adventurous past provides ample material for a biography, but the author has chosen to tell his story in the form of a novel:

If I am asked why I have made this work of fiction, the answer is that the material for a biography does not exist: only the character and setting for a tale. Some of the episodes are from his own telling, some based on the adventures of others, some spun out of my own head. I have felt free to ascribe to the imaginary Captain Niven incidents which never happened (though they might well have) to the real Captain Bollons; but the diminishing number of those who remember Captain Bollons will recognise him.²⁷

Part One of the book is entitled 'The Castaway, 1881', and it opens dramatically with a storm in Foveaux Strait:

It was blowing great guns from the north-west. The seas were rolling in on the beach and drawing off again with a hiss, revealing a vicious undertow. The rocky headlands at either end of the bay were smothered in spray with every sea that broke.²⁸

During the storm, a ship is wrecked on the beach of the small island of Motu Uira, and among the crewmen is a sixteen-year-old apprentice, John Niven, originally from Scotland. He is made so welcome by the Maori inhabitants of the island that he decides to stay there and is adopted into one of the local families, becoming a fluent speaker of Maori and well-versed in Maori traditions and genealogy. After several years, the local magistrate and commissioner arranges for John to join the crew of the Government steamer which patrols the New Zealand coast. Part Two, 'The Captain, 1921', leaps forward forty years to the period when John has become Captain of the Government steamer, and it describes aspects of his varied career, including relieving lighthouse crews, checking buoys, charting the sea-bed, and occasionally sailing to

the sub-Antarctic islands or the Pacific. His knowledge of the New Zealand coast is unsurpassed, and his deep knowledge of Maori language and customs puts him in a unique position to mediate between Maori and Pakeha. The author concentrates on Captain Niven's public persona and barely mentions his personal life; the fact that he has a wife and four children is referred to only in passing.

Eve Sutton has written a number of well-researched historical novels, including several published as part of Hamish Hamilton's 'Antelope Books' series which are intended for readers of six to nine years. Although the books are necessarily brief, with simple straightforward plots, Sutton has crafted satisfying tales which, as Fitzgibbon comments, 'demonstrate the quality of a writer who can create credibility of character and background within the confines of an exciting story told with great economy and simplicity'.²⁹ In *Green Gold* (1976), Adam arrives in Auckland alone on his eleventh birthday, after a nightmare voyage that has claimed his father's life:

If we could have turned back, once we knew the horror of that voyage, I think we would have done, and my father would have been alive today. [...]

My knuckles shone white now as I grasped the ship's rail. It seemed that I could still smell the stench of too many people in too small a space, of sweat and filth and unwashed bodies, of men and women and children, wretched and seasick and ill, their mess uncleared around them. And the food – hard tack, those ship's biscuits that Sir Joshua's hounds might have relished, dried fish and salted meat – the stinking rotten meat that had killed my father.³⁰

Adam's uncle Will is not there to meet him, so Adam has to travel to the goldfields at Grahamstown (Thames) to deliver the treasure his father has entrusted to him. With the help of a fellow passenger, Miss Flossie Fuller, 'all purple silk curves and pink and white face powder and bright golden heaped up curls',³¹ and two Maori children he meets along the way, Adam manages to get to Grahamstown and find his uncle. The treasure, rather than the gold Adam had imagined it to be, turns out to be packets of seeds, which will allow Adam and Uncle Will to set up gardens and grow the exotic fruits and flowers that would survive only in hothouses in England but which will flourish in New Zealand's milder climate.

Johnny Sweep (1977) and *Tuppenny Brown* (1977) are both about twelve-year-old boys who arrive in New Zealand on their own and, through perseverance and hard

work, overcome adverse circumstances and make successful new lives for themselves. Johnny Davies, a former chimney sweep, is a cook's boy on a whaling ship. Sickened by the slaughter of the whales, and terrorized by the brutal captain, he deserts the ship in New Zealand and makes his way to a gum-diggers' camp. He starts cooking for the diggers, and in two years has made enough money to send for his family from England to join him. Tuppenny Brown has even fewer advantages than Johnny, as he has never had any family and is in Parkhurst Prison in England after being arrested for theft. A group of boys from the prison is sent to New Zealand to give them the chance of a better life, and Tuppenny finds himself working on a farm with the kind family who befriended him on the voyage out. He becomes a skilled gardener, has the courage to face up to one of the other Parkhurst boys who is trying to coerce him back into a life of crime, and starts saving to buy his own farm. As Hebley notes, 'By isolating her protagonists from their origins, Sutton provides them with a creative means of finding a positive identity and entrée into the adult world'.³²

All three of Sutton's stories have a first person narrative, and are told in a direct and economical style which belies the depth of research underpinning the plot. Tuppenny's story, for example, is based on the arrival in Auckland in 1842 of ninety-two boys aged between eleven and nineteen who had been freed from Parkhurst Juvenile Prison and sent to New Zealand as apprentices. A further thirty-one boys arrived the following year, but they were not made very welcome by the inhabitants of Auckland and their fortunes appear to have been mixed. Sutton contrasts the fortunes of Tuppenny who, despite a few setbacks, adapts to a new way of life, with those of his older associate Jake, who cannot shrug off his criminal background, and tries to set up his own crime ring in New Zealand. Similarly, *Johnny Sweep* gives concise but accurate accounts of whaling and gum digging, though Johnny differs from his contemporaries in his sympathy for the whales, and concern about the impact of the gum digging:

It worried me. All around us as we walked there were these great ugly holes, these heaps of derelict earth. It was like a battlefield, scarred and pitted. I remembered the lush greenness of the bush.

“We’ll have to do a bit of burning off tomorrow.” Mick was cheerful after our good day. “There’s all that patch of fern and tea-tree to clear. We’ll drop a match. Then we might do a bit of bleeding. You can climb up some of the trees and make cuts in them. The gum leaks out, and later on it’ll grow hard.”

“But doesn’t that hurt the trees – kill them?”

“Oh ay,” answered Mick carelessly. “But what’s the odds? There’s plenty more.”³³

In *Johnny Sweep* the ship’s cook tells Johnny, ““In this world there’s two kinds of folk. There’s some that destroys, and some that makes, and I know which I’d rather be.””³⁴ In these three books, Sutton draws attention to the environmental destruction caused by whaling and gum digging, and the social destructiveness of crime; and indicates that it is only by choosing to be ‘makers’ – gardeners or cooks – that Adam, Johnny and Tuppenny will find happiness.

Sutton’s *Surgeon’s Boy* (1983) is another story based on historical research, but because it does not have the same constraints of brevity and simplicity as the three previous books there is greater development of character and plot. Fourteen-year-old Jamie finds himself in New Zealand when the ship on which he and his father, a doctor, have travelled from England is commandeered by escaped convicts in Sydney. Jamie and his father find refuge at a whaling station on Kapiti Island, where Doctor Fenton’s medical skills are welcomed by the whalers and the local Maori. After a number of adventures, Doctor Fenton and Jamie settle in the fledgling settlement of Port Nicholson, and Jamie decides that rather than returning to England and school, he will stay and help his father until he is old enough to go to medical school.

Sutton provides colourful accounts of life in 1840s Sydney, Paramatta, Kororareka, Port Nicholson, a shore whaling station, a Maori pa, and aboard ship, all described from the perspective of a young boy. For example, for Jamie the most memorable aspect of Sydney is a visit to a fairground, and Port Nicholson is notable mainly for the ferocity of the sandflies which attack the settlers sleeping in tents on the beach. Jamie is from a privileged background – he is heir to his grandfather’s estate in England – and his views of life change as he comes into contact with those less fortunate. Although Jamie becomes more tolerant and understanding through his

encounters with the convicts, whalers, and Maori, and plans to become a doctor, the ending shows he is not necessarily committing himself to staying in New Zealand as his father has:

Soon, the start of my real work with Dad, on the shore stations with the Maoris and the whaling men and the little squeakers.
And next year, or the year after, England, Petherick Hall, the hospital ...
A whole new life was there, waiting for me.³⁵

There is no indication whether the ‘real work’ in New Zealand will take precedence over Petherick Hall and all it stands for.

Tom, the main character of *Traveller* (1979) by Anne de Roo, also comes from a background of comparative privilege, and grows in maturity and understanding through his experiences in New Zealand, particularly through his relationship with the enigmatic ex-convict George. Unwilling to become a country vicar like his father, sixteen-year-old Tom emigrates to New Zealand in 1855 to work as a cadet on a back-country sheep station. ““We don’t ask in Canterbury what a man has been but what he can become,”” Mr Fitzgerald, the Superintendent of Canterbury, tells Tom,³⁶ and this thought sustains him through the difficult months that follow. Even getting to Summerdowns, the station where he is to live, involves a dangerous and uncomfortable tramp across the trackless Canterbury Plains, and the work at Summerdowns is hard and monotonous. De Roo gives convincing descriptions of driving mobs of sheep across the plains, the difficulties of crossing flooded rivers, and the hardships of sleeping in a makeshift tent on frosty nights, or in the rain, with nothing to eat but mutton and damper and strong black tea. The life she depicts is reminiscent of that described by Elwell in *The Boy Colonists* (which she presumably used as one of her sources), but de Roo is a much more accomplished storyteller than Elwell, and there is a well-constructed plot which interweaves Tom’s story with that of the famous sheep stealer, McKenzie, and his dog, and that of convict George.

George is an unpleasant character, but the revelation of his unfortunate life elicits a certain amount of sympathy. There is an implied contrast between George, who was transported from England against his will; Tom, who has chosen to come to New Zealand because he thinks he can have a better life; and Randall Searle, the owner of

Summerdowns, who sees his time in New Zealand as simply an interlude: “‘Septimus was heart and soul in the business of building a new and better land, but for me the colonial life was never more than a pleasant, adventurous way to invest money and then head back to the old country and real life’”.³⁷ *Traveller* is notable for the accuracy of not only the historical information it imparts but of the geographical details of the setting. De Roo’s descriptions of the Canterbury Plains with its treacherous rivers, Summerdowns station in the foothills of the Southern Alps, and the wild and beautiful McKenzie Country, show her familiarity with the terrain:

Through a thicket of wild Irishman, across sharp stones, splashing through shallow backwaters, the little procession trailed in silence to where the high bank fell away and the world opened out in splendour on the shore of a lake, vast and silver in the evening light, with white mountains rearing skyward on its distant shore.³⁸

With its strong characters, credible plot, and adherence to the historical record, *Traveller* provides an engaging and seemingly authentic insight into the early days of Canterbury settlement.

The hero of *The Parkhurst Boys* (1986) by Margaret Beames is, as in Sutton’s *Tuppenny Brown*, one of the ninety-two boys from Parkhurst Prison who were sent to New Zealand as apprentices in 1842; but unlike the street urchin Tuppenny, Charlie is a law-abiding middle-class boy who has become a prisoner ‘through misfortune, not misdeed’.³⁹ Ten-year-old Charlie runs away from his harsh boarding school and makes his way to London, where he is befriended by a homeless foundling named Joss. The two are arrested for stealing an orange, and spend two years in Parkhurst Prison before being shipped to New Zealand. On their arrival in Auckland – ‘a straggle of wooden shanties and muddy unpaved roads’⁴⁰ – there are few jobs available in the trades the boys have been taught in prison (mainly shoemaking and tailoring) and many end up working on road gangs. Joss is given work by a carpenter who teaches him his trade and treats him as one of the family. Charlie, on the other hand, is mistreated by his employer and runs away. He is found by a group of Maori and goes to live with their tribe, initially as a slave, but soon as the best friend of the chief’s son. Meanwhile, Charlie’s sister Muriel has come to New Zealand to find him, which she eventually does with Joss’s help. Charlie returns with her to England

to resume his old life; the implication is that for a boy of his class this will be superior to what he could expect in the raw colony of New Zealand. For Joss, however, like Tuppenny, New Zealand offers the opportunity of a new and better life, and he is happy to stay. He even chooses to call himself 'Parkhurst': "It was hard at the time but it got me here and gave me the chance of a real life with Mr and Mrs Mac who are just like me own fam'ly to me and I ain't going to be ashamed of it ever!"⁴¹

Beames provides a one page afterword headed 'Is it True?' outlining the history of the Parkhurst boys, and indicating which of the characters named in the text were real people. The descriptions of Parkhurst Prison, the voyage to New Zealand, the reception of the boys by the citizens of Auckland, and the details of life in the new colony, bear evidence of extensive research. The authenticity of the historical background helps to anchor the rather melodramatic storyline, which features ill-treated orphans, a wicked uncle, a deathbed confession, and attempted murder. There are a number of similarities between *Tuppenny Brown* and *The Parkhurst Boys*, especially in the characters of Tuppenny and Joss, who share the same background – both are foundlings who turn to petty crime for survival – and have similar experiences in New Zealand – both are given work by kindly families who treat them well, and offer them the chance to learn worthwhile trades and create successful new lives. They share the same surname until Joss decides to change 'Brown' to 'Parkhurst', and they even think the same. Tuppenny's comment, "I'd never known there was so much water in the whole world",⁴² is echoed by Joss: "I never knew there was this much water in the world," muttered Joss, staring with dislike at the sea.⁴³

Jessie Jenkin's Diary (1989) by Kathryn Rountree is unique among settler stories in that it deals solely with the voyage to New Zealand; no details are given of the emigrants' lives in England prior to setting sail, and the story ends with the ship anchored a mile off shore from Wellington. Despite its brevity (thirty-six pages) and copious illustrations, *Jessie Jenkin's Diary* is not a picture book for young children; rather it is an attempt to provide an accurate account of an emigrant voyage in fictionalised form. According to the information on the back cover of the book:

The character of Jessie Jenkin is fictional. But the ship on which she sailed – the *Lord Auckland* – did in fact carry many immigrant families on their search for a new life in New Zealand, and the events described in this diary all occurred during the voyage of 1841-42.⁴⁴

These events include natural occurrences such as storms in the Bay of Biscay, being becalmed in a heat wave, and encountering fog and icebergs in the southern oceans; tragedies such as a boy lost overboard, the death of two young children, and several people injured in accidents; and happy occasions including crossing the Equator, Christmas celebrations, and the birth of a baby. Jessie and her family are steerage passengers, so their conditions are unpleasant for much of the voyage, and there are constant references to overcrowding, noise, the smell of vomit and diarrhoea, infestations of rats, cockroaches and head-lice, and illnesses among their fellow passengers.

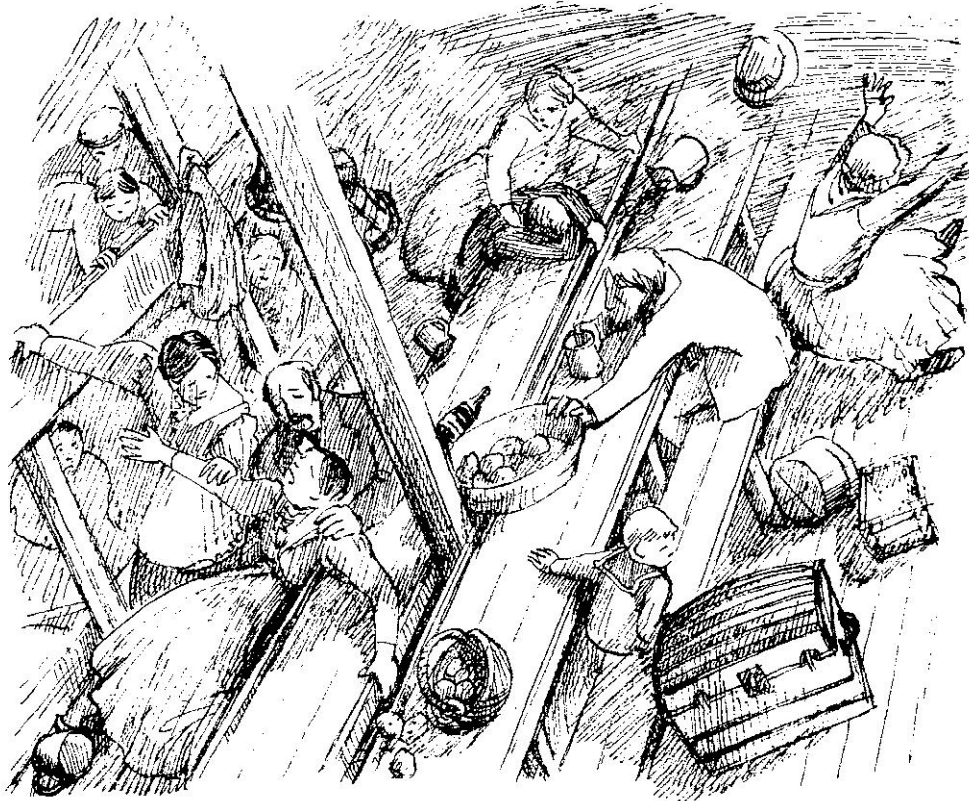


Illustration for 5 October by Gary Hebley for *Jessie Jenkin's Diary* by Kathryn Rountree.

Everything is told in the form of brief diary entries, so not much detail is given, and there is little sense of personal involvement. The matter-of-fact tone of the entries

gives no indication of Jessie's character or her emotions, which is disconcerting when she is describing tragic incidents such as the loss of a boy overboard:

It was Billy Thomas, a friend of Tom. He had fallen from the top of the rigging. We saw him bob up twice behind the ship, then disappear. Nothing was found but his hat. Tom got a good wallop and no dinner. The rest of us had boiled pork and a tin of onions.⁴⁵

The black and white line illustrations by Gary Hebley on every page, as detailed as the text is sparse, help readers to visualize what the text leaves unsaid (though Jessie is still shown with luxuriant ringlets after the text relates how her hair has been cut off to get rid of lice). The note on the back cover describes Jessie as thirteen years old (no age is given in the actual text), but the illustrations, which show her as much younger, are more plausible, given that Jessie receives a rag doll and a cradle for Christmas, and she and her friend Lucy play at tea parties and leapfrog. The characters are too one-dimensional to engage much sympathy; nevertheless, it would have been interesting to have even a few lines to describe how they fared in their new land. If they shared the unrealistic expectations of Jessie's mother, they would be sadly disillusioned: 'Mama says New Zealand is like a dream land. We will be able to swim in the sea every day and eat Christmas treats all year long.'⁴⁶

For the immigrant family in *Circles* (1996) by William Taylor, New Zealand is far from 'a dream land', as twentieth century teenager Tom Costello discovers when he finds a manuscript written by his great-great-grandfather, Thomas Costello. Excerpts from the manuscript, Thomas's account of his experiences as a pioneer in New Zealand in the 1870s, alternate with Tom's life in the 1990s. There are in effect three narrators – Thomas as a young man in the 1870s experiencing the events he describes; Thomas as an old man in the 1920s commenting on these events and the changes that have occurred since that time; and Tom in the 1990s, reading about the past while having his own experiences in the present. There are many similarities between the two young men – Tom has inherited Thomas's personality and appearance; both are sixteen (though Thomas's manuscript takes him through to old age); both, like many of Taylor's fictional characters, are addicted to smoking, drinking, swearing and shooting; and both fall in love with a beautiful young Maori woman of the same aristocratic family. However, Tom's life as the son of wealthy,

albeit neglectful, parents, is vastly different from that of Thomas, who arrives in New Zealand with his parents and younger brother Robert in 1876 to take up a block of land purchased from a land company in England. The land proves to be a plot of dense bush in the central North Island; the promised township of Preston Bridge is only a collection of tents in a muddy clearing; and the company's dishonest agent swindles the settlers out of their remaining money. Thomas's mother soon sickens and dies, and his father is drowned when their hut is swept away in a flood. However, the boys' luck changes when a Chinese pedlar, whom they help after he is attacked by robbers, leaves them a fortune in gold sovereigns. Thomas uses his new-found wealth to bring the dishonest land agent to justice, buy out all the settlers who no longer wish to stay, and establish a thriving settlement. He falls in love with Te Rangimarie, daughter of the local Maori chief, but she dies soon after the birth of their son. He subsequently marries an Italian countess, builds a gracious home with lovely gardens, and becomes a philanthropist.

Circles differs from most of the other books about the colonial period in that it is a young adult novel and is written from the perspective of adolescent males; hence the sexual references, the descriptions of shooting expeditions in which goats, possums and cats are killed in large numbers, and the implication that swearing, smoking and getting drunk are acceptable, and even admirable, behaviour. Another difference is that *Circles* is not just a story of the pioneering days ending with Thomas happy and prosperous in his fine home. Instead, it continues the history of the family from the 1870s to the 1990s, and shows how the events of the past have an impact on succeeding generations. Thomas's manuscript and the accompanying documents resolve a modern land dispute, involving Maori protestors occupying a site Tom's father wishes to buy, by proving ownership of the disputed land. Tom's perceptions are changed by the revelations about his family, including the discovery that his great-great-grandmother was Maori and that he is therefore related to the land protestors he has regarded as 'bloody niggers'; and the fact that the family wealth was not a result of his ancestors' hard work but came from a Chinese pedlar.

The plot of *Circles* is dramatic rather than convincing, and Thomas's ability to recall precise impressions and record verbatim entire conversations from his youth requires

a certain suspension of disbelief. Nevertheless, Taylor successfully evokes the hardships endured by the early settlers who tried, and often failed, to create homes in the inhospitable terrain of the central North Island. The dual narrative allows him to compare the lives of the settlers with those of their twentieth century descendants, as in this description of Preston Bridge in 1876:

There were five structures of log and canvas in the clearing of our settlement. They seemed to float, all [of] them, like some weird disjointed Noah's ark, in pooled water and mud. They were connected by walkways, catwalks of logs. Of timber, for any purpose whatever, there was certainly no shortage. To be sure, the observer was hard-pressed to judge this was a clearing. Indeed, enough trees had been felled to provide a space of sorts. Very many stumps were mute evidence of this. The bush, however, had seemed almost to ignore the puny efforts of human muscle and, had it been a fine clear day, very little more than a sliver of blue sky might have been seen.⁴⁷

Thomas observes many changes in his lifetime, and by Tom's day, Preston is a bustling township with shops where he can buy junk food and cigarettes and hire soft porn videos. Readers are left to draw their own conclusions about the felling and burning of the native bush that has made this possible.

The protagonist of *Young Exile* (1996) by Éliane Whitehouse is a fourteen-year-old orphan who comes to New Zealand on her own in 1849, after her parents and siblings have died of typhoid, leaving her alone and destitute. A previously unknown relative, Mr Cardew, arranges for Jess to travel to New Zealand as a nanny for a family of immigrants, and organizes a position for her as a maidservant on her arrival. The first half of the book deals with Jess's life in England, and the voyage to New Zealand, during which Jess has to cope with storms, heat-waves, icebergs and the death of one of the children she is caring for. Jess has been well-educated by her mother, and teaches the children and her cabin-mates to read. On her arrival in Waikouaiti, near Dunedin, Jess finds that her employer is a violent drunkard, who beats his wife and tries to get into Jess's room at night. Jess runs away to Dunedin, collapses with a fever, and is found and cared for by the local doctor's family. In a series of fortunate coincidences, it is discovered that the doctor was a friend of her father's in Scotland, and that Jess is the heiress to a fortune in England. The Cardews stand to inherit it all if Jess does not claim her share, hence their decision to dispatch her to the other side

of the world. Jess decides to stay Dunedin and use her money to start a school for poor girls (and possibly marry the doctor's son).

Young Exile is one of the few books about a female immigrant travelling to New Zealand on her own, rather than as part of a family group, but the author does not really address the vulnerable position of women in this situation. Jess's first employer may be a brute, but she finds plenty of supportive friends to help her escape from him (leaving his wife and children at his mercy), and she soon finds much more agreeable employment as a teacher. The themes of domestic violence and sexual predation, and the age of the protagonist, suggest that *Young Exile* is intended for a teenage audience, though this is at variance with the format, as the comparatively brief text and very short chapters seem more suited to younger readers. The book's brevity does not allow for character development, dramatic events are glossed over, and there are gaps in the narrative; for example, it is never explained why Jess's father left his teaching position to work on the docks for a wage insufficient to support his family.

Tessa Duder's *Tiggie Thompson, All at Sea* (2002) gives a more realistic view of the plight of young female immigrants. Like *Circles*, the book has a dual narrative, providing a first person account of a fifteen-year-old girl's voyage to New Zealand during the 1850s as a sub-story within the main narrative (which is set in 1999/2000 against a background of the America's Cup regatta in Auckland and the millennium celebrations). Tiggie (Antigone) Thompson, the eponymous heroine of Duder's trilogy of which this is the second volume, is also fifteen.⁴⁸ Her life is complicated – her parents have both lost their jobs and are about to move to Australia; her best friend has anorexia; she is being harassed by abusive emails from a half-brother she has never met; and she has issues with her weight. She has also secured a role in a television costume drama, playing the part of Eliza Matthews, an aristocratic Victorian girl who flees to New Zealand after she has been raped by her uncle. *Tiggie Thompson, All at Sea* alternates between Tiggie's story, narrated in the first person in the present tense, and Eliza's journey, also first person, but told mainly in the past tense and in italic font. It subsequently transpires that Tiggie has written Eliza's narrative, based on her television script.

Eliza's story is suitably dramatic. Finding herself pregnant after being raped by her clergyman uncle, she runs away from home and takes a passage on a ship to New Zealand, sharing a cramped steerage cabin with forty-nine other girls. As well as the usual problems of shipboard life described in other novels – squalid conditions, poor food, terrible storms – the girls have to cope with unwelcome attentions from the crew, in particular the sadistic Mate who repeatedly rapes one of the younger girls. Complaints to the Captain result in the complainants being put in irons. Eliza gives birth at sea, but the baby is stillborn, just one of several deaths which occur on board. The only redeeming feature of the journey is the friendships the girls forge with each other. Eliza's story, as told by Tiggie, ends with her working as a governess in Auckland, but in the television series, described in *Tiggie Thompson's Longest Journey*, Eliza marries a prominent citizen and lives a long and contented life, so there is finally a happy ending after the trauma she has been through. At one point in *Tiggie Thompson's Longest Journey*, the television scriptwriter tells Tiggie of the research she has done for the series: 'In this case reading lots of books about immigration, family histories, nautical histories. Voyage diaries lodged in the Auckland City Library research collection'.⁴⁹ Tiggie's research includes reading Victorian novels to get a feeling for the dialogue of the time, and going sailing in an old fashioned sailing ship. Possibly Duder is describing her own research in fictional terms. In the Acknowledgments for *Tiggie Thompson, All at Sea*, she mentions specific texts:

I am also indebted to Charlotte Macdonald's *A Woman of Good Character*, Tony Simpson's *The Immigrants – the Great Migration from Britain to New Zealand, 1830-1890*, and Sarah Ell's *The Adventures of Pioneer Women in New Zealand* for insights into the conditions endured by nineteenth century women on the longest sea journey and one of the most astonishing migrations of peoples in history.⁵⁰

Tiggie Thompson, All at Sea demonstrates the difference between a story which relies on research and one which is based on first-hand experience. Eliza's story has been well-researched and is based on real accounts, but it lacks the conviction and sense of reality of the 'modern' strand of the novel. For Tiggie's story, Duder was writing about a time and place she was herself experiencing, and references to the events,

personalities and culture of 1999/2000 (some of them still current but others – the Y2K Bug, the America's Cup Village, the filming of *Lord of the Rings* – already history) give a real sense of time and place which it is difficult to replicate.

Out of Tune (2004) by Joanna Orwin also has a dual time scheme. Teenaged Jaz has problems with her parents and with her 'cool' new friends, and her only refuge is her weekly visit to her great-grandmother, Gi-Gi. Jaz's story is juxtaposed with that of Maggie, Gi-Gi's grandmother, who left the Shetland Islands as a fifteen-year-old in 1872 to settle with her family on Stewart Island. Jaz reads Maggie's diary aloud to Gi-Gi every week, so the modern and historical stories proceed in tandem. Maggie's story is the stronger and more interesting of the two, and Orwin has created a convincing picture of the gradual disillusionment of the group of Shetlanders who left their homes with high hopes of making a better living, only to be frustrated by the inhospitable conditions on Stewart Island and the New Zealand government's failure to provide the promised support. Their story is based on actual events, and Orwin has used official historical records and reminiscences from descendants of the settlers to re-create their situation as faithfully as possible. Although she points out that 'the characteristics, motivations, and interactions attributed to my characters are fictional and are in no way intended as portrayals of the real people historically involved',⁵¹ Orwin's research ensures that their motives for leaving the Shetlands, their reactions to their new home, and their subsequent actions are entirely credible.

Maggie, intelligent, stubborn and hardworking, is also a shrewd observer, and faithfully records the experiences and changing dynamics of the little group of immigrants. Her diary entries are couched in appropriate language, utilising the Scottish dialect (skattald, nowt), archaic phrases (the arts of Living), and the obsolete convention of capitalizing significant words:

As for these dark dripping trees, I find them stifling. Everywhere I look, across the bay to the hills opposite, up behind the Barracks, I can see nowt but the Trees pressing in on us. The air is heavy with their dankness. Oh, how I long for the open spaces of my Shetland skattald.

It is all so Different here. It seems we must learn anew even the most basic arts of Living.⁵²

Despite their efforts, the Shetlanders are unable to master ‘the arts of living’ on Stewart Island. There is no market for the fish they catch, they cannot get title to the land they have been promised even though they have laboriously cleared and planted it, one of their number dies, others leave, and there is dissension among those who remain. Maggie’s father’s fiddle, rendered out of tune and unplayable by the damp air of Port William, is an apt image for the death of their hopes. After less than a year, they abandon their settlement and their dreams of owning their own land, and move to Invercargill or Bluff to find employment. It is usual for children’s books to end on a positive note, but in *Out of Tune*, though the modern story ends with the resolution of Jaz’s problems, the conclusion of Maggie’s story is the failure of the Shetlanders’ undertaking. Gi-Gi tells Jaz a little of their subsequent history, but hearing that Maggie eventually became a teacher, married and had ten children, does not change the overall depressing tone of her narrative.

In contrast to the realistic portrayal of immigrant experiences in *Out of Tune*, *The Lost Children* (2007) by Sarah Mayberry is a far-fetched adventure story, which harks back to Mona Tracy’s tales of plucky English lads and lasses surviving great perils in the wilds of New Zealand with the aid of a trusty Maori friend. In this case, the children are Ethan Melville (described variously as being eleven and thirteen) and his younger sister Amy, who are shipwrecked on the Taranaki coast in 1867, and undertake an eventful journey to their father’s South Island farm in the company of Meg, a young fellow passenger with a dubious past, and Tama, an escaped Maori slave. *The Lost Children* is based on the television series of the same name, and the need for constant action and cliff-hanger endings for individual episodes results in a story which emphasises dramatic scenes but lacks cohesion and credibility. There are many narrow escapes and implausible incidents featuring a variety of colourful characters, including an eccentric Austrian botanist who steals Maori taonga, and a Miss Havisham-like figure who lurks round a graveyard at night in her wedding-gown waiting for her missing bridegroom. After many hair-raising adventures, the story eventually concludes with Ethan and Amy reunited with their parents, Tama back with his own tribe, and Meg, having renounced her criminal connections, setting out to forge a new life for herself in Wellington.

Although the back cover describes *The Lost Children* as ‘A riveting drama about an unlikely band of young people thrown together during the chaos of the New Zealand Wars’,⁵³ the book is not based on actual historical campaigns, and in fact the Wars feature only to the extent that the protagonists encounter small groups of Maori warriors and British soldiers in the course of their travels. Tama tells the children that the Maori leader, Ka-Awatea, is “‘the great chief who will turn back the tide of rats who eat our land,’” and that he will kill all the Pakeha.⁵⁴ However, when the children encounter Ka-Awatea (inexplicably living in a cave on his own with no sign of followers), he saves them from the soldiers who are pursuing them, and they subsequently return the favour by rescuing him when he is captured. *The Lost Children* makes no attempt to provide an accurate representation of New Zealand in the 1860s, and does not convey a sense of period; possibly in the original televised version this would have been provided by setting and costumes. More rigorous editing may have rectified a number of anomalies in the plot and removed infelicitous and ahistorical phrases, such as ‘She snuck across the sand dunes’.⁵⁵

Lorraine Orman’s *Land of Promise: The Diary of William Donahue, Gravesend to Wellington, 1839-1840* (2008) gives a more credible, and (as in *Out of Tune*) more pessimistic view of settlement, which contrasts the glowing promises made by the Wakefields’ New Zealand Company to prospective settlers with the reality which faced them on arrival in the new land. The story is closely based on historical events; as Michael King points out, ‘Company prospectuses and allied advertising told many lies about the nature of the new country[...]; by the time the truth was revealed, colonists had arrived and were unlikely to turn around at once and depart.’⁵⁶ Rather than the neatly laid-out township they had been expecting, the settlers who arrived in Britannia (later renamed Wellington) found a rudimentary and disorganized settlement on unsuitable land; the ownership of which, moreover, was contested by the Maori inhabitants. The protagonist of *Land of Promise* is thirteen-year-old Will Donahue, whose father has sold his haberdashery shop in Bristol and borrowed money to bring his family to New Zealand in the hope of making their fortune by establishing an emporium in the new settlement. Over half of the book is devoted to the five and a half month voyage to New Zealand, and tries to convey to readers the atrocious conditions endured by passengers, with details which will be familiar to

readers of previous books on immigration. The tedium of the voyage is relieved by a stop in Cape Town, where the passengers can go ashore; but on the whole it is not a pleasant experience for the Donahue family, especially since one of the several deaths on board is that of their young baby, Lucy.

On arrival in New Zealand, the settlers have to live in tents or raupo huts for months, subject to flooding and minor earthquakes, while the land is surveyed; and Mr Donahue finds few customers for his makeshift shop. When he is eventually allocated the land he had paid for in England and starts to build a proper house and shop, the building is nearly burnt down by local Maori unhappy at the way their land has been taken over by the settlers. The house is saved only by the intervention of Rauru, a Maori boy with whom Will has become friendly. Mr Donahue and various other settlers are prepared to abandon New Zealand and try their luck in Chile, but reluctantly decide to stay. When the story ends, in November 1840, the new shop has been built and is doing well, and Will has achieved his ambition and become apprenticed to the local newspaper publisher. However, it is not an unqualified happy ending, as although there is ‘an uneasy peace’⁵⁷ between Maori and colonists, there are hints that there could be trouble in the future. (The armed conflict which occurred in the Wellington region a few years later is not mentioned in *Land of Promise* but forms the topic of *Muskets and Trouble* by R. A. Owens, which will be discussed in Chapter Six.) As with her previous historical novel, *Cross Tides*, Orman has used a variety of resources to provide an accurate historical background for her fictional story. Some of the characters are real people, and these are listed in the ‘Author’s Note’ which prefaces the narrative. The ‘Historical Note’ and illustrations at the end provide further information about the New Zealand Company, the Wakefields, and the settlement of Wellington.

In the earlier settler novels, well-off colonists re-created miniature versions of England with little effort (*Distant Homes*, *Waihoua*, *Across Two Seas*); middle-class young men came to New Zealand for adventure and then returned to England and civilization (*Amongst the Maori*, *The Boy Colonists*, *Maori and Settler*); or working class emigrants achieved better lives through hard work (*The Runaway Settlers*, *Tuppenny Brown*, *Johnny Sweep*). The contrast between the optimistic endings of

these novels and the endings of *Out of Tune*, where the attempted settlement is a failure in spite of hard work and good intentions, and *Land of Promise*, where the reality of settlement fails to live up to expectations, is one example of the way historical novels about emigration to New Zealand have changed between 1862 and the twenty-first century. The authors of the Victorian novels wished to encourage emigration, so minimized the difficulties encountered by settlers, whereas most of the more recent novels, often based on extensive research, are more realistic about the problems and actualities of settler experience.

During the one hundred and forty-six years which separate the publication of *Distant Homes* and *Land of Promise*, significant changes have also occurred in such areas as ideology (particularly in representations of Maori, class structures, and gender roles), and literary techniques. In the Victorian and early twentieth century novels considered in Chapter Four the dominant ideologies focused on imperialism and evangelization; but the demise of the British Empire, the loosening of New Zealand's ties with England, and the decline in organized religion have undermined the certainties which underpinned these books. Consequently, later texts take a different approach to the representation of Maori and Maori/Pakeha relations; although, like the novels discussed in the previous chapter, the later books on immigration to New Zealand focus exclusively on the Pakeha settler experience. None of the books has a Maori focalizer and the impact of the arrival of the settlers on New Zealand's indigenous inhabitants is not examined. The implication is that the Maori experience of colonization is not important; rather, it is Pakeha colonial history which is significant, or, at any rate, a suitable subject for children's fiction. While exciting or frightening first encounters with Maori feature prominently in all of the Victorian historical novels, this is not such a strong theme in later books, when Maori had ceased to be the novelty that they were to the British writers and readers of the earlier texts. Neither do the authors of the later books perceive Maori as being in urgent need of being civilized or converted, so these texts have fewer Maori characters, and in some cases none at all. There are certain parallels with Australian historical fiction for children, where Bradford identifies in early twentieth-century books an 'eloquent silence regarding Aborigines and the violence and dispossession they endured following white settlement'.⁵⁸ She goes on to point out that:

Most Australian children's texts produced in the first few decades of the twentieth century omit Aborigines from accounts of Australian history or reconfigure historical events to produce stories of white heroism and black savagery, thus positioning children to see themselves as citizens of a white Australia and the inheritors of a tradition of pioneer endeavour. Such strategies seek to elide aspects of the past in order to produce a new national identity.⁵⁹

While New Zealand children's texts do not take such an extreme position, in that 'black savagery' features in only one twentieth century settler text (*Maori Jack's Monster*), they are similar to Australian historical fiction in positioning readers to see themselves as 'the inheritors of a tradition of pioneer endeavour'. Few of the books question the right of the Pakeha colonists to settle in New Zealand, or consider the effect of colonization on Maori. Unlike adult historical fiction, where novels such as Witi Ihimaera's *The Matriarch* give a Maori perspective, settler books for children are about colonizing, not being colonized.

While Maori are always viewed in these texts from the perspective of the Pakeha protagonists, the way they are depicted has gradually changed during the seventy-four years between the publication of Howes' *Young Pioneers* in 1934 and Orman's *Land of Promise* in 2008. Howes' attitude could probably best be described as patronizing, and similar in tone to the Victorian novels (which the author and her audience would presumably have read): 'At the first sight of the Maori crews, with their great rolling eyes and brown skins, and big half-naked bodies, Mrs Forsyth went pale with fear and Jo and Jack clutched each other's hands. Savages!'⁶⁰ The children are frightened, but their father reassures them that, "'The Maoris are friendly and jolly.'"⁶¹ The biggest Maori, Rata, is particularly attached to Jo. 'He brought little presents for Jo, to whom he was devoted; pretty shells, bright feathers, a flax bag, a shark's tooth, bird's eggs, a score of such odds and ends.'⁶² The fact that Rata is a friendly and jolly Maori presumably renders him harmless; it seems unlikely that the parents of a young girl would accept with equanimity a similar 'devotion' to their daughter on the part of a Pakeha man.

As noted, *Maori Jack's Monster*, written during the 1950s, focuses on Maori savagery; "'There's only one thing a Maori likes better than a musket, Davey. [...]

That's to shoot somebody with it.'"⁶³ The Ngapuhi tribe are described as fierce cannibals, given to killing and eating white settlers and other Maori indiscriminately under the leadership of their evil tohunga, Te Uhi. They are also gullible, believing that Maori Jack is a great tohunga, and willing to obey him implicitly. Under his leadership they live in peace with the settlers, and the malevolent Te Uhi is reduced to extorting tobacco and rum from local farmers. When Maori Jack loses his mana, however, the tribe revert to their old ways. 'Though the Ngapuhi had been peaceable for ten years, they had never become Christians. They were among the last of the Maori tribes to stand by their ancient traditions – traditions based on *utu*, the law of revenge.'⁶⁴ (This is a distortion of historical reality, as Ngapuhi were among the first Maori to convert to Christianity.) In the fighting which follows, Davey and Janet narrowly escape with their lives. There is no indication of what becomes of the tribe once the chief, Pekapeka, and both its old and new tohunga, Te Uhi and Maori Jack, are dead. The Ngapuhi disappear from the story, which goes on to describe how Davey becomes a wealthy farmer on what was formerly Maori land. Gilderdale thinks that Crisp's treatment of Maori is not entirely negative:

Although not initially sympathetic towards the Maoris, by the end of the book they are at least seen as consistent, and the overall message is that even if they are fierce and revengeful they are not obsessed with money and possessions like the Europeans.⁶⁵

On the other hand, the farmhand, Billy Louis, son of a Maori mother and French father, always referred to as 'the half-caste', is depicted as inferior to full-blooded Maori and Pakeha.

In books written during the 1960s – *They Came to Cook Strait*, *The Emigrants*, *The Runaway Settlers* and *Fire in the Bracken* – Maori are more "civilized" than the "savage" Ngapuhi of *Maori Jack's Monster*, although the attitude in *They Came to Cook Strait* is ambivalent. The Maori seaman, Hemi, is described as the best seaman on the ship, has a 'fine' face, 'good to look at, with plenty of laughter in it',⁶⁶ and is very helpful in telling Dick about New Zealand. Kahu and Kiri and their Maori mother, whom Dick befriends in Port Underwood, are welcoming and hospitable, and, as the author stresses, very clean and tidy. Te Rauparaha is quite different:

It was his thin hooked nose and fierce deep-set eyes that made Dick sure he was Te Rauparaha, the Maori Napoleon who had conquered many tribes and never grew tired of plotting, fighting, and killing to gain more power. When Te Rauparaha spoke, Dick noticed the cruelty of his mouth, the way his forehead wrinkled into lines of cunning.⁶⁷

Te Rauparaha's 'cruelty' and 'cunning' are confirmed when he disputes the right of the settlers to the land at Wairau. His denial of having sold the land to Captain Blenkinsopp is attributed to his desire to sell the land again to the New Zealand Company for a higher price. Nevertheless, Te Rauparaha is presented as an exception, and Dick's plans for the future include 'meeting the Maoris, whom he still liked in spite of those few whose deeds had brought evil upon his friends'.⁶⁸

The Emigrants presents the Auckland Maori as amiable but lazy. 'The Maoris laughed. They preferred to lie in the sun and sleep off a vast meal of shellfish. "Taihoa!" they said, with immense friendliness and complete inertia.'⁶⁹ In a plot device reminiscent of Kingston's novels, Dr Barnet tends a Maori injured in an accident and brings him home to live. The family all 'grow to love the big brown man who had such gentle ways with children,'⁷⁰ and Mrs Barnet refers to him as 'our Maori'. The text indicates that, as in the earlier books, he will mediate between the races if hostility breaks out.

"I no fight your people, not ever," said their guest seriously. "But I see fighting, not this year, not next year – who knows? Your Queen send foolish people to govern sometime perhaps." [...]
Soon he would leave them but he would always be an ambassador of peace between the races.⁷¹

The reasons for possible fighting in future are hinted at in a song chanted by Maori boatmen, which is given in both Maori and English versions, and concludes:

"The Pakeha teaches us much;
We like him. He is kind.
But we like our old ways,
And the Pakeha is numerous as stars.
Go away, go away Pakeha."⁷²

The Runaway Settlers also depicts cordial relationships between Maori and settlers, but with no hint of possible future dissension. Although the first impressions of Maori are negative – the Phipps boys find the local Maori frightening and suspect

them of wanting to steal the vegetables they are taking to market – these are soon replaced by positive images, when one of the Maori villagers comes to check that the boys have returned home safely. The text states that, ‘They were Christians and tried to live like Europeans, but they only half succeeded,’⁷³ but goes on to describe the Maori as superior to Europeans in some respects; the village has a church and a school, and, ‘Most of the older people and all of the young ones could read and write, which was more than could be said of many white people at that time’.⁷⁴ Mrs Phipps shelters two Maori women during a storm and cures a sick baby, and in return the Maori help the family to acquire a boat. The friendship and co-operation between settlers and Maori does not extend to other races, however. The Phipps children are afraid of Mr Cracroft Wilson’s Indian servants, and Mrs Phipps is indignant that her boys are expected to share the quarters of the Indians with their inedible food and strange ways.

Fire in the Bracken has certain elements in common with *The Adventures of Johnny van Bart*, which was also published in the mid-1960s, in that both have a dramatic and rather unlikely plot about a runaway boy making a new home for himself in New Zealand, and both feature Maori in the stereotypical role of the brave and resourceful helper. Tiapora, the son of a chief (another common motif), rescues Jim from Despard, helps him find a home with a Pakeha farmer, and subsequently comes to his aid at various crucial moments. Tiapora learns to speak English but his language skills remain rudimentary: “‘Him pig-t’ief. Kill *pakeha* in Auckland. Then go prison. Him friend no good Maori.”’⁷⁵ Even at the end of the book, after many years of contact with his English friend, his language skills have not markedly improved: ‘Tiapora, a middle-aged man, has just called: “Py korry, Jim, it’s late. I t’ink we better shut up.”’⁷⁶ The underlying assumption in *Fire in the Bracken* is that ‘good Maori’ like Tiapora and his tribe support the Pakeha, and that only ‘no good Maori’ are opposed to their presence. This aspect of the book will be considered further in Chapter Six.

During the 1970s and 1980s there was increased public awareness of the impact of European settlement on Maori, exemplified by the establishment of the Waitangi Tribunal and the Maori Land March in 1975; and this is reflected in the historical

fiction for children published during this time. Bernard Fergusson, as the son of a Governor General and later as Governor General himself, had more exposure to Maori culture than most New Zealanders of his time, and in *Captain John Niven* he provides the fullest and most sympathetic picture of Maori life of any of the early settler books. The Maori community on Motu Uira where John Niven lives for many years is described with affection and little sense of Pakeha superiority, and the knowledge of Maori language and customs Niven acquires is shown to be invaluable in his future life:

I tell you straight that most of the happiness in my life, and I'm a happy man, has come from the one stroke of good fortune, which at the time might have seemed just the opposite. And that was being ship-wrecked as a boy, and then being brought up, in a happy little community of Maori where their values were simple and straightforward. [...] Some of the Maori practices and customs were pretty odd to our way of thinking. But I learned an awful lot about Christian charity when I was a boy among the Maori.⁷⁷

This is a reversal of the situation in earlier books, where Maori are shown as the beneficiaries of Pakeha knowledge. However, despite the almost idealized view of Maori life in *Captain John Niven*, the perspective is still that of an outsider (who sees some of the customs as 'pretty odd'); and it is notable that it is Niven, a Pakeha, rather than his Maori shipmates, who is called upon to mediate in Maori disputes.

In *Surgeon's Boy* Sutton portrays Maori in rather romantic terms. Kiri Bassett, the whaler's Maori wife, is a handsome woman who moves 'like flowing music' and whose voice is 'musical and gracious'.⁷⁸ Jamie's friend Tahu is 'a merry companion. Like all the Maoris I'd met, he had a happy nature and a robust sense of humour'.⁷⁹ Although these descriptions seem positive, they represent Maori as a homogenous group distinguished from Pakeha by their racial attributes, such as graceful movements and happy natures. Jamie and his father immediately establish good relationships with all the Maori they meet. As in a number of previous books, Dr Fenton earns their respect by curing several sick Maori, and he displays his cultural sensitivity by asking the tohunga to help him, a complete reversal from earlier texts in which tohunga were generally regarded as evil witchdoctors. Friendship between Maori and Pakeha characters also features in *The Parkhurst Boys*. Young Charlie is rescued from drowning by a group of Maori and becomes the slave of Rewa, the

chief's son. He is treated well, and the boys become firm friends, so much so that Rewa describes Charlie as his brother. Rewa's father, the chief, is another romantic character – 'a regal figure in a fine soft cloak of feathers'.⁸⁰ In contrast to the often unflattering portrayal of Maori as uncivilized savages in Victorian immigrant novels, historical novels of the 1970s and 1980s go to the opposite extreme in their idealistic portrayals of Maori and the relationship between Maori and the Pakeha settlers.

The only book about immigration to New Zealand published during the 1990s, William Taylor's *Circles*, continues this trend by having Maori represented in both past and present narrative strands by a beautiful, intelligent and aristocratic young woman with whom the protagonist falls in love. Taylor has Tom expressing extremely racist anti-Maori sentiments at the beginning of the modern narrative, so that he can trace his gradual change in thinking. Initially Tom refers to the protesters as 'damn radicals' and 'bloody niggers',⁸¹ but his involvement with the attractive Di, and the discovery of his own Maori heritage, lead him to defy his father and support the protesters in their land claims. Taylor depicts a range of attitudes to the Maori land claims (just as Orman does in *Cross Tides*), from Tom's antipathy to the more moderate view of the elderly Mr Flynn:

"Why should the Maoris get it for nothing? Gettin' everything these days."

"Probably because we flogged more than everything from the poor buggers in the first place."⁸²

Although Tom's feelings change, he is not shown as engaging with Maori in general, just with one attractive individual, who is moreover different from other Maori. As in *Fire in the Bracken*, *Surgeon's Boy*, *The Parkhurst Boys*, and *Land of Promise* (and numerous books discussed in other chapters), the Maori characters whom the protagonists befriend are from chiefly families; and, as in *Cross Tides*, the subjects of interracial romances are more like Pakeha than Maori. Di is 'tall and slim, clear-featured'⁸³ with 'skin the colour of creamy, creamy coffee',⁸⁴ and Te Rangimarie bears a strong resemblance to the Italian countess who becomes Thomas's second wife.

Lorraine Orman identifies the problem faced by modern authors when writing historical fiction set during the Victorian period in a note prefacing the text of *Land*

of Promise: ‘In the early 19th century, even well-meaning Europeans held attitudes about other races that would be considered ignorant or offensive today. For the sake of authenticity, I have sometimes put words into my characters’ mouths that reflect their historical time and place.’⁸⁵ Will’s father thus reprimands him when he brings Rauru home. “‘Don’t get too friendly with that native boy. He’s all smiles at the moment, but you mustn’t forget he’s still a bloodthirsty savage. Get on the wrong side of him and he’ll come at you with a tomahawk.’”⁸⁶ Will, as the protagonist, however, is uncharacteristically devoid of prejudice, and when he first meets Rauru, he writes in his diary, ‘I found myself liking him immediately.’⁸⁷ His instincts are proved correct when Rauru prevents a group of disaffected Maori, led by his cousin, from burning down the Donahue’s partially completed house. Orman’s representation of Maori reflects twenty-first century sensibilities in its attempt to avoid reinscribing the ‘ignorant or offensive’ attitudes of the 1840s. Through Rauru’s statements, faithfully recorded by Will, she presents the Maori feelings towards the settlers; both those of his cousin Kuru and other young warriors who want to avenge the loss of their land by burning down settlers’ houses and killing their livestock; and the more pragmatic views of Rauru’s father and the older men, who are also unhappy but are not prepared to attack the Pakeha. Orman indicates that the Maori have good reason to be resentful at the way their villages, gardens, and burial places have been taken from them, but implies that the moderate view prevails; and the only instance of aggression is caused by young Maori who have drunk too much (Pakeha) whisky. Orman suggests that conflict will be avoided by friendship between individual Maori and Pakeha; Rauru and Will are ‘brothers’ who do not wish to fight each other.

This view appears to be borne out by the ‘Historical Note’ appended to the text, which omits from its outline of Wellington’s early history any mention of the fighting between some Maori and settlers that broke out in 1846. Kim Wilson, in an article on the Scholastic Press historical journal series (of which *Land of Promise* is part), draws attention to the way this series is often ahistorical in its ‘politically correct’ rewriting of history. She finds this problematic, ‘because fiction of this genre is so well positioned to inculcate (its readers with) particular sets of social ideas and values, due primarily to its claim of adhering to recognizable and verifiable “facts”’.⁸⁸

While the diaries are certainly understood to be fictional accounts of historical events, they are also declared as legitimate and “truthful” because they are based on real events. By connecting events of the diaries to real events or people outside the story, the ideals and values expressed by the author will accordingly be imbued with that prize epithet – “truth”.⁸⁹

Wilson goes on to assert that children are likely to believe the events and ideas advanced in these stories because the text is based on historical accounts.

Moreover, these journals emphasize their validity by the means of peritextual material such as a “Historical Note” placed at the end of the story. These notes offer no other perspective than that provided in the narrative and by doing so validate the story in the eyes of the reader – which is no doubt the intent.⁹⁰

Orman’s *Land of Promise*, written in light of the 2003 Waitangi Tribunal ruling upholding the Wellington Maori claim that large parts of the land appropriated by the New Zealand Company had not in fact been sold, reflects current ideologies rather than those of the 1840s.

The representation of Maori and Maori/Pakeha relations in twentieth and twenty-first century children’s books about the early settlement of New Zealand thus differs markedly from that of the Victorian novels discussed in the previous chapter. Another notable difference is in the origin and social status of the protagonists. Two of the later books, *Captain John Niven* and *Out of Tune*, have Scottish protagonists, rather than the exclusively English protagonists of the Victorian novels; and in *The Runaway Settlers*, *They Came to Cook Strait* and *Maori Jack’s Monster*, the immigrants, though originally from England, have lived in Australia for many years, and come to New Zealand by way of a second migration. In the early books, following the pattern set by *Distant Homes*, the protagonists are middle class families, who, even when their motive for emigration is a reversal of fortune, can afford to bring servants and buy large tracts of land, which they turn into successful farms. It is not until the publication of *The Runaway Settlers* in 1965 (over a hundred years after *Distant Homes*), that a book appears with protagonists who are definitely of the working class. These predominate in subsequent novels, with thirteen of the twenty texts considered in this chapter having working-class protagonists. The immigrants in these books generally survive appalling conditions as steerage

passengers, and on arrival in New Zealand have to engage in hard physical labour, often in the employ of others, to make better lives for themselves in their new country. For working-class settlers, it is essential to make a success of their venture, as they do not have the option, unlike the wealthier colonists in the earlier novels, of returning 'Home'.

In *The Runaway Settlers*, Locke extols the worth of working class values, and the importance of hard work and independence. The Phipps family originally emigrated from England to Australia to go farming, but clearly with little success, as the eldest daughter Mary Ann laments that 'the house is crumbling to pieces and we haven't a stitch to go out looking decent'.⁹¹ They contrive to get to New Zealand by offering to work for 'the Nabob' – Mr (later Sir John) Cracroft Wilson – initially looking after his animals on the boat, and then working at grubbing flax on his property in Cashmere, where they are housed in draughty barracks, poorly fed and poorly paid. When it becomes obvious to the Nabob that Mrs Phipps and the younger children are a hindrance, he grudgingly allows them the use of an abandoned cottage and a piece of land, which only unremitting toil transforms into a comfortable home and productive garden. The text describes the primitive living conditions, and the long hours of physical exertion required by Mrs Phipps and the older children to enable them to survive. Their only free time is when the weather is too bad to work outside, and only in the last chapter, eight years after their arrival in New Zealand, are family members shown relaxing rather than working.

Unlike the mothers of the earlier novels, Mrs Phipps does not have a maid to attend to the domestic chores; on the contrary, her daughter Mary Ann works as a maid for another family for some time before joining her family in New Zealand. Of all the family, it is only Mary Ann who appears to suffer from the family's low socio-economic status, always conscious of her inferior social position and lack of education (Mrs Phipps makes financial sacrifices to send the boys to school, but not Mary Ann). When a young man she is in love with becomes engaged to a young lady 'of good education and charming manners', Mary Ann tells her mother:

“I am a nobody [...] with no mansion at home in England, and I’ve never been to school, and I’m awkward in company, and my words don’t come out right when I speak. [...] They have “people” in England, but we are no better than labourers without even a father, alive or dead!”⁹²

Although Mrs Phipps tries to comfort her by saying that some gentleman will marry her because of her cooking and housekeeping skills, Locke intimates that Mary Ann is destined to remain unmarried.

The theme of New Zealand as a land of opportunity where working-class immigrants can better themselves through their own efforts reappears in many subsequent historical novels for children. In *Maori Jack’s Monster*, *Fire in the Bracken*, *Captain John Niven*, *Green Gold*, *Tuppenny Brown*, *Johnny Sweep*, and *The Parkhurst Boys*, young boys come to New Zealand on their own, with no money or prospects; and through a combination of initiative, hard work, and a certain element of luck, they all prosper, and achieve new lives which would have been out of their reach in England. The heroes of *Maori Jack’s Monster*, *Fire in the Bracken*, and *Tuppenny Brown* become farmers; Adam in *Green Gold* joins his uncle as a horticulturalist; Johnny Sweep becomes a cook; John Niven becomes a ship’s captain; and Joss in *The Parkhurst Boys* is apprenticed to a carpenter. Will in *Land of Promise* immigrates with his family rather than on his own, but for him also New Zealand is a land of opportunity, and he achieves his ambition of becoming a newspaper apprentice rather than having to work in his father’s shop. A few novels deviate from this pattern – in *Circles*, Thomas’s success comes from inheriting a fortune from a Chinese pedlar rather than his own efforts; and in *Out of Tune* (which has a female rather than a male protagonist) hard work is not enough to prevent the failure of the Shetland Islanders’ settlement. The attempted settlement by a group of stockmen from Australia and their families in *They Came to Cook Strait* also ends in failure when the men are killed, but this gives the young protagonist, Dick, the opportunity to fulfill his ambition of becoming a sailor.

Not all of the later settler books have working-class protagonists, and *The Emigrants*, *Surgeon’s Boy*, *The Parkhurst Boys*, *Traveller*, *Young Exile*, *Tiggie Thompson*, *All at Sea*, and *The Lost Children* feature middle-class characters similar to those of the

Victorian novels. The family in *The Emigrants*, in fact, bears a strong resemblance to those in the earlier books, right down to their servant Martha who is hard working and reliable but is also seen as a figure of fun. Martha is held up to ridicule when she parades in her best dress and bonnet, in a scene very similar to that in E. Nesbit's *Five Children and It* where the maid (also called Martha) is mocked for her bad taste in clothes. Class distinctions are carefully observed on board ship. The Captain is dubious about allowing passengers to mix, and one of the cabin passengers withdraws her children from Sibella's shipboard class because it includes steerage children. However, in Auckland, contact between the classes is more acceptable:

Mrs Barnet smiled as she thought of her relatives at home. She imagined Aunt Nancy saying, "My dear, do you mean that you allow Sally to go to school with a *milkman's* child?" and her reply, "No, Nancy, it is the little milkmaid herself whom Sally plays with."⁹³

Jamie, the grandson of the Squire of Petherick Hall (*Surgeon's Boy*), vicar's son Tom (*Traveller*), and middle-class Charlie with his posh voice (*The Parkhurst Boys*), also find themselves mixing with those of the lower classes when they come to New Zealand. Jamie's ideas about his station in life are challenged by his encounter with the convicts who seize the ship on which he and his father are travelling:

Petherick Hall, I thought uneasily.

One day I'll be back there, one day I'll be the Squire. The horses and dogs, the old family servants to care for me, the lavish dinner parties for our friends, enjoying with them the pheasant and grouse and hares I've shot, and the trout I've caught in my own river – one day ... and now these convicts have burst into my life. Are they all part of the same world?⁹⁴

Sutton gives a sympathetic view of the convicts. They have all been imprisoned for minor offences, and even the ring-leader, the fierce-looking Tiger, turns out to be kind-hearted, and is kept on as a permanent member of the ship's crew. Jamie's contact with the convicts, and his other experiences in New Zealand, influence his decision to train as a doctor rather than simply becoming the Squire.

Tom turns down the opportunity to become 'a scholar and a gentleman'⁹⁵ to come out to New Zealand as a cadet on a sheep station. He mixes with men of many different classes, including convict George, which gives him an insight into their lives.

However, although Mr Fitzgerald tells him that, ““We don’t ask in Canterbury what a man has been but what he can become,””⁹⁶ Tom cannot escape his upbringing: ‘A sense of desolation swept over him as he thought of the men with whom he had worked and shared a tent, day after day. They still belonged together while he had become something different, a cadet, a gentleman.’⁹⁷ The class system is adhered to strongly in Christchurch, and Tom’s friend Harriet Wills is cut off from respectable society because she chooses to let lodgings. Nevertheless, Harriet prefers to stay in New Zealand and work for her living, unlike Charlie in *The Parkhurst Boys* who, in spite of his friendship with street urchin Joss, returns to England to resume his middle-class life.

Such friendships between characters of different classes were unheard of in the Victorian novels, which reproduced the prevailing social structures of the time they were written. For example, in *The Redfords*, lower class stowaway Tim attaches himself to the Redford family, but is regarded by them as a servant rather than a friend. Other books, such as *Across Two Seas* and *The Boy Settler*, deplore the assumption of equality on the part of some lower class characters who have the temerity to address middle-class characters by their first names rather than showing proper deference. By the time the later settler novels were written, however, New Zealand had come to pride itself on being a ‘classless society’, and friendships between lower and middle or upper class characters, such as those in *The Emigrants* and *The Parkhurst Boys*, feature also in *Young Exile*, *Tiggie Tompson*, *All at Sea*, *The Lost Children*, and *Land of Promise*. The two latter books, in fact, deal specifically with the breaking down of class barriers, and shows that the social distinctions so carefully preserved in England and aboard ship are no longer relevant once the settlers arrive in New Zealand. In *The Lost Children*, middle-class Ethan and Amy forge a close friendship with Cockney Meg, who comes from a family of petty criminals, and whose father is in prison. In *Land of Promise* the ‘hoity-toity’ cabin passengers who refused to associate with those from steerage are shown as happy to mix with them when their shared experiences give them common ground. Will’s brother, Charlie, and Fanny, the daughter of a wealthy settler, plan to get married when they are old enough, and Will comments, ‘New Zealand is a brave new country where the son of a shopkeeper *can* marry the daughter of a rich man – and no-one

will raise an eyebrow'.⁹⁸ As with her depiction of race relations, Orman's view of colonial society conveys modern attitudes rather than necessarily reflecting the situation of the time.

Another aspect of the imperial ideologies of the Victorian and early twentieth century novels was their attitude to the indigenous landscape. In the novels considered in Chapter Four, the right of settlers to claim land and change the landscape was taken for granted, and authors commented approvingly on the way the 'wilderness' had been developed into productive farms and gardens. Later authors are more likely to consider the ecological effects of the wholesale destruction of the native flora and fauna. As far back as 1934, Howes' environmentally conscious characters create their house out of living trees so as not to fell any of the bush, and decide to study native birds rather than shooting them. Writing in the 1970s, Sutton also espouses environmental causes, by describing the negative effects of gum digging and whaling. In *Circles*, Taylor records the price of 'progress' which sees the felling and burning of huge tracts of native bush to provide grazing for sheep: 'What surrounds you today – calm, peaceful, serene – was, back then, a blackened, ever-smouldering hell-hole. The stench of the burning was ever in the air and, often for weeks at a time, a cloud-pall of smoke obscured both sun and sky.'⁹⁹ Although most of the bush is destroyed, Thomas, anticipating twentieth century environmental concerns, retains one area of virgin bush in memory of his parents. *Land of Promise* is the only book which considers the modification of not just the indigenous landscape, but of Maori villages and burial grounds which are removed to make way for the colonists' streets and houses.

As is the case with representation of Maori, social structures, and attitudes to the land, the presentation of gender roles has also changed over time. In the overwhelming majority of books about emigration to New Zealand, the protagonists are male. Many of the earlier books, such as those by Aylmer, Cupples and Forde, are about families emigrating to New Zealand and therefore feature both girls and boys, but Kingston's *Waihouora, or The New Zealand Girl* is the only Victorian novel with a female protagonist, compared with six which have male protagonists. A similar situation exists with the twentieth and twenty-first century texts, where, of the

twenty books considered in this chapter, nine are about families emigrating to New Zealand, nine are about boys settling in New Zealand their own, and two feature female protagonists who come to this country alone. Five of the family stories are focalized mainly by female characters, but there is still an imbalance in favour of male protagonists and focalizers. However, there is a greater range of roles available to female characters in these later books, reflecting not only the way the status of women has changed since the nineteenth century, but also the greater availability of historical material recording women's lives. As Gibbons notes, 'There was a major effort in the 1980s and 1990s to write women into history',¹⁰⁰ and one of the 'major studies' he cites, Charlotte Macdonald's *A Woman of Good Character: Single Women as Immigrants in Nineteenth Century New Zealand* (1990), was used as a source by Duder and possibly other writers as well.

In *Young Pioneers*, Jo and Jack (unlike Tom and Lucy in *Distant Homes*) share their adventures, and Jo is not expected to stay at home while her brother goes out shooting birds or looking for moa bones. She is just as good at shooting as her brother, and even has the freedom of dressing as a boy when she and Jack go on their expedition into the mountains. *Young Pioneers* also has an interesting role reversal – the children's mother has to be the breadwinner, while their father acts as nurse and caregiver to his injured mate. In *Maori Jack*, Janet is also independent and adventurous, and she too dresses as a boy and joins Davey in most of his exploits. However, she is not as brave as Davey, and at the end of the book she has to be rescued when she is captured by the Ngapuhi. Girls in these settler texts have fewer opportunities to make their own way than boys, and generally have things happen to them, rather than being actively adventurous like boys. In *The Runaway Settlers*, the Phipps boys are often shown having exciting adventures – Bill goes to the goldfields, Jack kills a boar and has his own boat, and Archie goes cattle droving – while Mary Ann is always pictured in a domestic setting, cooking, cleaning, or sewing. In one typical episode, when the boys are fighting a fire, she stays home baking scones to feed the fire-fighters. Mrs Phipps, on the other hand, rescues Archie when he is overcome by smoke and carries him to safety. Mrs Phipps is a redoubtable figure who is not restricted to the traditional female roles of housework, gardening and child-rearing. She is physically hardy, establishing a thriving market garden and

driving cattle to the West Coast; is an astute business woman; and is not afraid to confront 'the Nabob' to get what she wants. Mrs Phipps is atypical in the way she takes control of her life, as most female protagonists are younger and do not have the autonomy that Mrs Phipps has as a married woman.

In *Traveller*, when Harriet's fiancé dies, her options are limited by her age, sex and class – “Without Summerdowns and Septimus I'm as imprisoned by my crinoline as those poor fellows by their prison cells.”¹⁰¹ There are few occupations available for young ladies, and her decision to make a living by letting lodgings is frowned upon:

“Christchurch, muddy treeless swamp as it is at present, is our little bit of England, our remnant of civilisation, and civilisation means a place where English ladies behave like English ladies. And a lady, Tom, especially a young unmarried lady, does not let lodgings to shopkeepers and shopgirls and milliners and tradesmen, at least not if she wants to be accepted by society.”¹⁰²

However, Harriet is less concerned by possible ostracism than the fact that her gender precludes her from ever realising her dream of having a farm like Summerdowns, and this is contrasted with Tom's freedom to choose what he wants to do with his life. Tom can go and have adventures, “while I sit and do the mending and dream a man's dreams”¹⁰³ Nevertheless, even this is preferable to returning to England “to be treated as a poor unfortunate who became a widow before she was a wife”¹⁰⁴

Sibella in *The Emigrants*, Jess in *Young Exile* and Maggie in *Out of Tune* all find that emigration offers them greater opportunities than they would have enjoyed in Britain. Sibella feels stifled by her life of minor domestic duties in a dull middle-class household, Jess seems destined for a life of servitude after the death of her parents, and Maggie has a harsh subsistence lifestyle in the Shetland Islands. Their new roles – teaching and marriage – are quite conventional, and similar to those available to girls in the Victorian novels. They reflect the reality of the lives of many young women during the nineteenth century; when, as Raewyn Dalziel notes in 'The Colonial Helpmeet', 'marriage in New Zealand was the main occupation of women'.¹⁰⁵ Dalziel argues that:

Life within the bounds of home and family and respectability was not as frustrating as it had become for women of Great Britain. The letters and diaries of

women in New Zealand show that in the colonial context this role provided demands and challenges that held a high degree of personal reward and satisfaction. The colonial environment opened new doors. It gave, within the context of an accepted role, a sense of purpose, a feeling of usefulness and a greater degree of independence.¹⁰⁶

Land of Promise suggests that for young women of the working class, emigration also offers the chance to try new and different careers. In New Zealand, Sophie can work in her father's shop and even aspire to become his business partner, and "‘Nobody turns a hair’",¹⁰⁷ whereas in England all she had to aim for was marriage and having children. Meg, in *The Lost Children*, is able to free herself from the life of petty crime she led in England, and sets out to find work in Wellington (though just what this will be is not specified).

In *Out of Tune* Maggie achieves her ambition of becoming a teacher only after the failure of the Shetlanders' attempt to settle on Stewart Island, and much of the book describes the back-breaking work of trying to establish homes and gardens in the inhospitable terrain. A lot of the manual labour is carried out by the women, as the menfolk are away fishing for much of the time, and *Out of Tune* provides the most realistic representation in any of the immigrant novels of the hardships endured by female settlers. While in the books discussed so far, differences between women's lives in the nineteenth century and the present are implied rather than stated, the use of the dual narrative device compares Maggie's life with the vastly more privileged lifestyle of her twenty-first century descendant, Jaz. The same occurs in the *Tiggie Thompson* books, where the two time periods are juxtaposed to illustrate the way women's lives have changed since the 1800s. To give just one example, Eliza becomes pregnant after being raped by her uncle and runs away from home because of the shame this will bring upon her family, whereas no stigma is attached to Tiggie's decision to sleep with her boyfriend, and they have access to contraceptives to prevent unwanted pregnancies. Although Tiggie and Jaz have family and personal problems in their lives, these are comparatively minor compared with those of Maggie and Eliza, and the narratives make it clear that modern women enjoy higher standards of living, more freedom, and a far greater choice of roles than their Victorian predecessors.

Duder and Orwin are writing in a post-feminist world, and their heroines are both confident and assertive young women. Eliza and her friend Jane, in particular, rebel against their harsh shipboard conditions and incite the other young women to take action, and in New Zealand they become involved in the suffrage movement. Their characters are very different from those of the heroines of the Victorian novels, and could be seen as an example of ‘presentism’, reflecting modern models of social behaviour rather than historical reality. As Anne Scott McLeod observes, feminist readings can change the way history is written:

The current pressure to change old stereotypes into “positive images” for young readers is not only insistent, but highly specific about what is the desirable image, and often highly untenable. If the only way a female protagonist can be portrayed is as strong, independent, and outspoken, [...] and if these qualities have to be overt, distortion becomes inevitable.¹⁰⁸

While Duder does not necessarily ‘distort’ history – there were undoubtedly determined and outspoken women in the nineteenth century who paved the way for the suffrage and feminist movements – her characters have a modern sensibility which is similar to that of the twenty-first century Tiggy. It could be argued, of course, that this is a deliberate decision on Duder’s part to lend credence to the narrative conceit that Eliza’s story has been written by Tiggy.

Depictions of masculinity have also changed, in that no fewer than nine of the texts feature boys coming to New Zealand on their own and making new lives for themselves without the support of their families. Unlike the teenaged protagonists of *Amongst the Maoris* and *The Boy Settler*, many of the boys in these books are quite young (eleven or twelve in Sutton’s books); nevertheless they have greater independence and agency than their Victorian counterparts, and generally manage to fend for themselves and make their own decisions without relying on parental guidance. They also have a greater variety of career options available to them, and while many still choose a farming career, others become cooks, carpenters, printing apprentices, or ship’s captains. Fathers no longer have the high status accorded to colonial fathers in the earlier books. Only the fathers in *Young Pioneers*, *The Emigrants*, *Surgeon’s Boy* and *The Lost Children* are competent as parents and migrants; those in *Circles* and *Out of Tune* are unable to cope with settler life; the

father in *The Runaway Settlers* is a violent drunkard; and in the other books fathers are absent altogether. The loss of patriarchal power is mirrored in the decline of the family unit. There are few of the strong family groups central to the nineteenth century novels, and changing values are underlined by the fact that the families which feature in the modern strands of the dual narrative books are all dysfunctional.

The earlier books surveyed, even when the protagonists are teenagers or in their twenties, are addressed to child readers, and this is reflected in the subject matter and style. Some of the more recent books, however, can be categorized as 'young adult', and these have more adult themes and language; for example, the teenage protagonists of *Circles* smoke, drink and are sexually active, *Tiggie Tompson, All at Sea* deals with rape and teenage pregnancy, and a sexual encounter features in *Out of Tune*. This reflects not only the age of the protagonists and assumed readers, but the change in values over the past 140 years, for while in the earlier books it was acceptable to lecture the reader about God, and sex was not mentioned, the reverse is now true. The evangelization and moralizing which featured so prominently in the Victorian novels have no place in more recent texts. Religion is mentioned in only a few of the books published in the twentieth and twenty-first centuries, and often in negative rather than positive terms. In *The Runaway Settlers*, the Phipps family attend church, but it is described as a social gathering where neighbours have a chance to meet and chat more than a religious event. Maggie in *Out of Tune*, rather than being an eager evangelizer like her counterparts in the Victorian novels, is censured by the minister for 'taking the Lord's name in vain and questioning his works';¹⁰⁹ and in *Tiggie Tompson, All at Sea*, Eliza's attacker, who has already raped other young women, is a clergyman. While they are not religious, the later texts are not free of didacticism, and many espouse such virtues as hard work, honesty, charity and tolerance. The messages, however, are secular rather than theological.

There have been major changes in the ideology of the early settler novels since 1862, and there have also been changes in literary techniques. The language of more recent texts is less formal than that of books written during the nineteenth century. The earlier novels, particularly the Victorian ones, had an overt narrator and narratee, with the author frequently addressing the reader, generally to make a moral point. In the

more recent books there is an overt narrator only when there is a first person narrative. Eve Sutton was the first writer to use a first person narrative, in her four books written between 1976 and 1983, and it has since been used by five other authors – Rountree, Taylor, Duder, Orwin and Orman – in several cases in the form of a fictional diary. Another development has been the use of dual narratives juxtaposing modern and historical time periods, thereby allowing overt comparisons to be made between the two periods, and drawing attention to changes which have occurred in life styles, standards of living, the landscape, and the values and mores of New Zealand society. Duder and Orwin have used this technique to comment in particular on the changing role of women, while it has enabled Taylor to provide an almost continuous narrative from the first settlement in the 1860s to the 1990s, and to show how past events affect the present.

The books discussed in this chapter have been concerned with people arriving in New Zealand from other countries and learning to adjust to their new environment. In subsequent chapters, the emigrants have become colonists, and the emphasis is on being here, rather than arriving. Life in the new colony during the second half of the nineteenth century was shaped by two major events – the New Zealand Wars and the discovery of gold – and books about these will also be considered in following chapters.

¹ Joanna Orwin, *Out of Tune* (Dunedin: Longacre, 2004), p.112.

² Betty Gilderdale, 'Children's Literature', in *The Oxford History of New Zealand Literature in English*, ed. by Terry Sturm, 2nd edn (Auckland: Oxford University Press, 1998), pp.526-574 (p.531).

³ Gilderdale, 'Children's Literature', p.531.

⁴ Howes, Edith, *Young Pioneers*, illus. unknown (Christchurch: Whitcombe & Tombs, 1934), p.7.

⁵ Howes, p.7.

⁶ Howes, p.16.

⁷ Howes, p.30.

⁸ Howes, p.31.

⁹ Howes, p.11.

¹⁰ Frank Crisp, *Maori Jack's Monster* (London: Hodder & Stoughton, 1956), p.66.

¹¹ Crisp, p.74 and p.183.

¹² Sandall, Helen and Elizabeth Henniker Heaton, *The Emigrants*, illus. by Jane Paton (Hamilton: Paul's Book Arcade, 1963), p.12.

¹³ Sandall and Heaton, p.29.

¹⁴ Sandall and Heaton, p.77.

¹⁵ Sandall and Heaton, p.14.

¹⁶ Sandall and Heaton, p.29.

¹⁷ Elsie Locke, *The Runaway Settlers*, illus. by Anthony Maitland (London: Cape, 1965), [2004] p.175.

¹⁸ Fitzgibbon and Spiers, p.106.

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- ¹⁹ Locke, 'Children's Historical Fiction in New Zealand', p.8. Phil May was the author of *The West Coast Gold Rushes* (1967).
- ²⁰ George, S. C. *Fire in the Bracken*, illus. by Trevor. H. Stubley (Leeds: E. J. Arnold, 1966), inside dust jacket.
- ²¹ Hinerangi Kara, a librarian in the New Zealand section of the University of Waikato Library, confirmed that these usages were incorrect.
- ²² George, p.9.
- ²³ David Jensen, *They Came to Cook Strait*, illus. by Russell Clark (Auckland: Blackwood & Janet Paul, 1966), p.100.
- ²⁴ Jensen, p.99.
- ²⁵ Jensen, p.98.
- ²⁶ Bernard Fergusson, *Captain John Niven* (Auckland: Collins, 1972), p.127.
- ²⁷ Fergusson, p.126.
- ²⁸ Fergusson, p.6.
- ²⁹ Fitzgibbon and Spiers, p.141.
- ³⁰ Eve Sutton, *Green Gold*, illus. by Paul Wright (London: Hamish Hamilton, 1976), p.10.
- ³¹ Sutton, *Green Gold*, p.13.
- ³² Hebley, *The Power of Place*, p.25.
- ³³ Eve Sutton, *Johnny Sweep*, illus. by Paul Wright (London: Hamish Hamilton, 1977), p.52.
- ³⁴ Sutton, *Johnny Sweep*, p.19.
- ³⁵ Sutton, *Surgeon's Boy*, illus. by Fiona Kelly (Wellington: Mallinson Rendell, 1983), p.138.
- ³⁶ de Roo, Anne, *Traveller* (London: Heinemann, 1979), p.8.
- ³⁷ de Roo, *Traveller*, p.139.
- ³⁸ de Roo, *Traveller*, p.122.
- ³⁹ Hebley, *The Power of Place*, p.29.
- ⁴⁰ Margaret Beames, *The Parkhurst Boys*, illus. by Susan Opie (Wellington: Mallinson Rendell, 1986)
- ⁴¹ Beames, p.158.
- ⁴² Sutton, *Tuppenny Brown*, illus. by Paul Wright (London: Hamish Hamilton, 1977), p.12.
- ⁴³ Beames, p.66.
- ⁴⁴ Kathryn Rountree, *Jessie Jenkin's Diary*, illus. by Gary Hebley (Auckland: Longman Paul, 1989), back cover.
- ⁴⁵ Rountree, entry for 9 October 1841 (There are no page references).
- ⁴⁶ Rountree, entry for 24 September 1841.
- ⁴⁷ William Taylor, *Circles* (Auckland: Penguin, 1996), p.21.
- ⁴⁸ The first volume is *The Tiggie Thompson Show* (Auckland: Penguin, 1999), and the third is *Tiggie Thompson's Longest Journey* (Auckland: Penguin, 2003).
- ⁴⁹ Tessa Duder, *Tiggie Thompson's Longest Journey* (Auckland: Penguin, 2003), p.170.
- ⁵⁰ Tessa Duder, *Tiggie Thompson, All at Sea* (Auckland: Penguin, 2001), p.2.
- ⁵¹ Joanna Orwin, *Out of Tune* (Dunedin: Longacre, 2004), p.263.
- ⁵² Orwin, *Out of Tune*, p.111.
- ⁵³ Sarah Mayberry, *The Lost Children*, based on scripts and storylines by Michael Bennett, Kathryn Burnett and Gavin Strawhan (Auckland: Puffin, 2006), back cover.
- ⁵⁴ Mayberry, p.60.
- ⁵⁵ Mayberry, p.171.
- ⁵⁶ King, p.172.
- ⁵⁷ Lorraine Orman, *Land of Promise: The Diary of William Donahue, Gravesend to Wellington, 1939-1940* (Auckland: Scholastic, 2008), p.186.
- ⁵⁸ Clare Bradford, 'The End of Empire? Colonial and Post-colonial Journeys in Children's Books', *Children's Literature*, 29 (2001), 196-218 (p.197).
- ⁵⁹ Bradford, 'The End of Empire?', p.197.
- ⁶⁰ Howes, p.9.
- ⁶¹ Howes, p.10.
- ⁶² Howes, p.32.
- ⁶³ Crisp, p.28.
- ⁶⁴ Crisp, p.176.
- ⁶⁵ Gilderdale, *A Sea Change*, p.26.
- ⁶⁶ Jensen, p.19.

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- ⁶⁷ Jensen, p.81.
- ⁶⁸ Jensen, p.94.
- ⁶⁹ Sandall and Heaton, p.119.
- ⁷⁰ Sandall and Heaton, p.168.
- ⁷¹ Sandall and Heaton, p.167.
- ⁷² Sandall and Heaton, p.130.
- ⁷³ Locke, *The Runaway Settlers*, p.79.
- ⁷⁴ Locke, *The Runaway Settlers*, p.79.
- ⁷⁵ George, p.24.
- ⁷⁶ George, p.96.
- ⁷⁷ Ferguson, p.95.
- ⁷⁸ Sutton, *Surgeon's Boy*, p. 48 and p.50.
- ⁷⁹ Sutton, *Surgeon's Boy*, p. 104.
- ⁸⁰ Beames, *The Parkhurst Boys*, p.71.
- ⁸¹ Taylor, *Circles*, p.23.
- ⁸² Taylor, *Circles*, p.87.
- ⁸³ Taylor, *Circles*, p.31.
- ⁸⁴ Taylor, *Circles*, p.107.
- ⁸⁵ Orman, *Land of Promise*, p.6.
- ⁸⁶ Orman, *Land of Promise*, p.119.
- ⁸⁷ Orman, *Land of Promise*, p.115.
- ⁸⁸ Kim Wilson, "'Are They Telling Us the Truth?'" Constructing National Character in the Scholastic Press Historical Journal Series', *Children's Literature Association Quarterly* 25.1 (2007) pp.129-141 (p.130).
- ⁸⁹ Wilson, p.130.
- ⁹⁰ Wilson, p.138.
- ⁹¹ Locke, *The Runaway Settlers*, p.12.
- ⁹² Locke, *The Runaway Settlers*, p.128.
- ⁹³ Sandall and Heaton, p.162.
- ⁹⁴ Eve Sutton, *Surgeon's Boy*, p.30.
- ⁹⁵ de Roo, *Traveller*, p.13.
- ⁹⁶ de Roo, *Traveller*, p.8.
- ⁹⁷ de Roo, *Traveller*, p.84.
- ⁹⁸ Orman, *Land of Promise*, p.182.
- ⁹⁹ Taylor, *Circles*, p.113.
- ¹⁰⁰ Gibbons, 'Non Fiction', p.81.
- ¹⁰¹ de Roo, *Traveller*, p.16.
- ¹⁰² de Roo, *Traveller*, p.96.
- ¹⁰³ de Roo, *Traveller*, p.146.
- ¹⁰⁴ de Roo, *Traveller*, p.9.
- ¹⁰⁵ Raewyn Dalziel, 'The Colonial Helpmeet: Women's Role and the Vote in Nineteenth-Century New Zealand', in *The Shaping of History: Essays from The New Zealand Journal of History*, ed. by Judith Binney (Wellington: Bridget Williams Books, 2001), pp.185-195 (p.187).
- ¹⁰⁶ Dalziel, p.187.
- ¹⁰⁷ Orman, *Land of Promise*, p.157.
- ¹⁰⁸ MacLeod, Anne Scott, 'Writing Backward: Modern Models in Historical Fiction', *The Horn Book Magazine*, 74.1 (1998) 26-33 (p.32).
- ¹⁰⁹ Orwin, *Out of Tune*, p.38.

CHAPTER SIX

TIMES OF TURBULENCE: THE NEW ZEALAND WARS IN JUNIOR FICTION

“A woeful day it was for both our races when this crazy war began. Had we shown more justice, had they checked their fighting spirit, we might have lived together in friendship for ever.”¹

Once immigrants started arriving in New Zealand in large numbers, the demand for land for settlement and fundamental differences in concepts of sovereignty and land ownership between Maori and Pakeha resulted in armed conflict. The New Zealand Wars, a series of campaigns involving British and colonial troops and many of the North Island Maori tribes (some of whom supported the British), were, as James Belich notes:

bitter and bloody struggles, as important to New Zealand as were the Civil Wars to England and the United States. [...] The wars were also crucial in the development of New Zealand race relations, and they marked a watershed in the history of the country as a whole.²

The first armed clash following the signing of the Treaty of Waitangi was the so-called ‘Wairau Incident’ in 1843, which arose from a dispute over the ownership of the Wairau Plain between New Zealand Company settlers from Nelson, who claimed to have bought the land, and Ngati Toa, led by Te Rauparaha and his nephew Te Rangihaeata, who maintained that the land had not been sold. Attempts by the Maori to disrupt a survey party led to an armed confrontation, in which twenty-two settlers and a number of Maori were killed. The New Zealand Company was subsequently involved in similar disputes about land ownership in the Wellington area.

Meanwhile, a more serious conflict had broken out in Northland, where the actions of the Ngapuhi chief, Hone Heke, led to the Northern War of 1844-45. The war was triggered by Heke’s cutting down of the Kororareka flagstaff, which he saw as the symbol of British sovereignty. Heke and his ally, Kawiti, attacked Kororareka in March 1845, leaving the town largely destroyed by fires resulting from the explosion of a powder magazine and by extensive looting. Ten months of fighting followed, culminating in an attack by British forces on Kawiti’s pa at Ruapekepeka, but the outcome of the war was inconclusive, and ended with peace being made between Heke and Kawiti and Governor George Grey.

War broke out in Taranaki in 1860 over the Government purchase of a block of land at Waitara. The local chief, Wiremu Kingi Te Rangitake, maintained that the Ati Awa chief, Te Teira, who had sold the land, had no authority to do so, and the peaceful occupation of the block by Kingi's supporters prompted a military response. Governor Gore Brown brought 3000 imperial troops from Australia, and over the course of a year many Taranaki pa were attacked. The inability of the imperial troops to win a decisive victory led to a truce being declared in March 1861, though there was a resumption of fighting in 1863.

That same year, the Government, under George Grey (who had replaced Thomas Gore Browne as Governor in 1861), instigated an invasion of the Waikato to stamp out the King movement, and battles took place at Rangiriri, Rangiaowhia and Orakau, and subsequently at Gate Pa and Te Ranga in the Bay of Plenty. The Government had around 20,000 fighting men at its disposal (composed of imperial troops, colonial troops such as the Forest Rangers, local militia, and Maori, mainly from Te Arawa), while the Kingitanga had around 5000 warriors, of whom no more than 2000 were in the field at any time. Nevertheless, the war was hard fought: Maori troops had victories at Rangiriri and Gate Pa; and the Battle of Orakau became famous for the defiant cry of its defenders that they would fight 'for ever and for ever'. Following the war, which cost the lives of 1000 Maori and 700 Europeans, King Tawhiao and his followers retreated to the King Country, and 1.3 million hectares of land was confiscated by the Government.

The Waikato War was followed by four years of fighting across the North Island, mainly in Taranaki, the Bay of Plenty and the East Coast, sparked by the rise of Pai Marire (otherwise known as Hauhau), a new religion which promised to deliver its followers from Pakeha domination. Four hundred Pai Marire supporters were captured in 1865, and many of them were imprisoned on the Chatham Islands. In July 1868, one of the prisoners, Te Kooti Arikirangi Te Turuki, masterminded an escape from the Chathams by commandeering a ship which was delivering stores to the island. Te Kooti hoped to settle down peacefully with his followers, but was pursued by Government troops, and there followed four years of sporadic fighting in

the Poverty Bay, Urewera and central North Island regions. Te Kooti was a master of guerrilla warfare, and in spite of several defeats, including the loss of his fortified pa at Ngatapa and Te Porere, he won many of his encounters and staged a number of successful raids, particularly in Poverty Bay. He managed to elude capture, and was eventually pardoned by the Government.

During the same period (1868-69), fighting flared up again in Taranaki, as groups of Maori, under the leadership of Riwha Titokowaru, resisted the Government's confiscation of their lands. Continuing fears among the settlers of renewed conflict led to the destruction of Parihaka pa in November 1881, even though its occupants, under Te Whiti, had remained resolutely peaceful. Although tensions remained, and the effects of the wars, particularly land confiscations, continued to be felt, the armed conflict between Maori and Pakeha was effectively over.

From the outset, accounts of the conflicts were written by Pakeha rather than Maori, and therefore gave the Pakeha viewpoint of the causes and course of the wars. Peter Gibbons has pointed out that in reality the imperial and colonial troops were only partially successful, but that texts about the wars 'deliver what the soldiers could not', by conflating various episodes into 'a broad narrative of conquest'.³ He also notes that 'the "Maori Wars" of the 1860s allowed colonists to narrativize their aggressive history as the just defence of their persons and property against "rebels" and fanatics'.⁴ A particularly relevant example occurs in a history of New Zealand published in 1908 by Reginald Horsley, who also wrote a fictional account of the wars which will be discussed later in this chapter. Horsley gives a graphic description of Te Kooti's raid on Poverty Bay, and concludes:

Above the cry of horror which went up all over the island when the dismal news of the massacre spread, was heard the stern oath of strong men, who vowed they would not rest until they had cleared the earth of this blood-soaked savage and his gang of murderers.⁵

The distinction between stern, strong and upright settlers and 'blood-soaked savages' is an ongoing feature of both historical and fictional accounts of the wars. James Cowan's *The New Zealand Wars* (1922-23) was based on the oral testimony of both Maori and Pakeha participants in the fighting, but although he had some sympathy for the Maori cause, Cowan was more concerned with the experience of the settlers.

James Belich comments that, ‘Cowan was a product of an intensely Anglocentric, Empire-worshipping period in New Zealand’s development, and in this context his balance is quite impressive.’⁶ Later accounts of the wars, such as Keith Sinclair’s *Origins of the Maori Wars* (1957) and his influential *History of New Zealand* (1959) questioned the moral rectitude of the settlers and suggested that greed for land was the main cause of the wars. As Gibbons notes, ‘Rather more than hitherto the blunders of officials and the antagonisms of the settlers are made the cause of hostilities.’⁷ Sinclair’s account questions settler ideology and greed, but it was not until 1986 that James Belich’s revisionist history of the New Zealand Wars provided the first major challenge to the accepted version of the conflict and attempted to re-interpret the campaigns from a Maori perspective. According to Belich, ‘a firmly entrenched and widely disseminated received version exists almost unquestioned’:⁸

The story of the New Zealand Wars has remained fundamentally unchanged since the nineteenth century. The Victorian interpretation is alive and well and living in New Zealand. Conclusions about what actually happened often remain unchanged. Maori successes continue to be underestimated. British victories continue to be exaggerated, and entirely fictional triumphs continue to be seen as real.⁹

Belich’s detailed analysis of the Maori role in individual engagements and his consideration of the wider social and ideological context in which the wars (and the subsequent interpretations of the conflict) occurred, undermined the ‘received version’ of the New Zealand Wars. Subsequent histories, such as Judith Binney’s *Redemption Songs: A Life of Te Kooti Arikirangi Te Turuki* (1995), investigate the Maori experience and draw heavily on Maori sources.

Historical novels about the wars rely on the sources available to their authors at the time of writing, so the earlier books, starting with G. H. Henty’s *Maori and Settler* in 1891, had a definite pro-British and pro-settler stance. Horsley’s *In the Grip of the Hawk* (1907) was clearly based on the material the author had gathered for his fervently imperialistic history text which appeared a year later. Cowan’s history of the wars would no doubt have provided the background to many later novels, such as those by Mona Tracy and Ronald Syme, who share Cowan’s Anglocentric background and his propensity to depict the wars as a type of adventure story. From

the 1960s onward, however, authors of historical fiction for children, such as Roderick Finlayson, Elsie Locke, Ron Bacon and Anne de Roo, were writing novels about the New Zealand Wars which made a serious attempt to present the Maori experience as well. To some extent, their questioning of the settlers' motives mirrors that of Sinclair's histories, but their presentation of at least some aspects of the conflict from a Maori perspective prefigures Belich. Roderick Finlayson's *The Springing Fern*, for example, in which the wars are described solely from the point of view of the Maori participants, predates Belich's text by twenty years. Some authors, however, base their books on the 'received version', even post-Belich; and of the three historical novels about the wars published since 1986, only Bernard Gadd's *Blood of Tainui* appears directly influenced by Belich's work.

Historical novels for children cover most of the major events of the New Zealand Wars, though some aspects have proved more popular. The Waikato War is the subject of seven novels, while five deal with Te Kooti and his campaigns. The other conflicts – the land disputes at Wairau and Wellington, the Northern War, and the Taranaki War – feature in only a few books. In the following section, I consider all of the books in order of publication, rather than grouping them according to location, to give a clearer view of how attitudes to the wars have evolved.

The first fictional treatment of the New Zealand Wars in a book for children was Henty's *Maori and Settler*, aspects of which have been discussed in Chapter Four. As already noted, Henty borrowed freely from published accounts of the wars, and much of that part of the book dealing with the conflict has clearly been lifted straight from a history text, in contrast to the lively pace of the narrative as a whole.¹⁰ For example, when Wilfred asks a colonist about the 'native troubles', the latter launches into a ten page speech which outlines the cause of the wars, the rise of the king movement, the campaigns in Taranaki and the Waikato, and advent of the Hauhau. Similarly, when Wilfred and Mr Atherton become involved in the fighting in Poverty Bay following Te Kooti's escape from the Chathams, their fictional exploits are interwoven with detailed accounts of actual military campaigns. Henty states in his Preface: 'The massacre of Poverty Bay, which forms the leading feature of my story, and the events that flowed from it, are all strictly in accordance with facts.'¹¹ Henty

does not distort these ‘facts’ by giving his imagined characters a major role in the fighting, or allowing them to influence the course of events. Readers therefore get a good overview of the causes and conduct of the conflict, though naturally from the point of view of the authors of Henty’s source material, who were British. In common with other writers of the time, Henty does not distinguish between adherents of Pai Marire and Te Kooti’s followers, who belonged to the Ringatu religion, and he labels them all Hauhaus.

Henty is firmly on the British side, but he does try to be evenhanded; he condemns the actions of Te Kooti and of the Hauhaus, particularly the massacre of entire families of Pakeha settlers in Poverty Bay, but he is also critical of some aspects of the British campaign. Mr Atherton, who represents the voice of reason in this novel, is scathing about the incompetence of several of the army officers, such as Major Biggs and Colonel Lambert. He describes instances of poor decision making on their part, and comments, “‘I have observed over and over again that in the majority of cases when an Englishman reaches a certain rank in official life, he seems to become an obstinate blockhead.’”¹² One of the settlers complains that:

“We colonists are very discontented with the dilatory way in which the war has been carried on, and think that if things had been left to ourselves we would have stamped the rebellion out in half the time. The red-coats were much too slow; too heavily weighted and too cautious for this sort of work.”¹³

Nevertheless, Henty, while deploring the conduct of the war, does not question the underlying rightness of the British cause and the need to ‘stamp out the rebellion’. In spite of their incompetence, the Government troops prevail, and the book ends with Te Kooti disappearing into hiding in the Waikato.

He was no longer dangerous, his schemes had utterly failed, his pretensions even in the native eyes had been altogether discredited, and all who had adhered to him had been either killed or punished by the destruction of their villages and clearings. There was not the slightest chance that he would ever again trouble the community.¹⁴

The Renshaws and Mr Atherton are happy with this outcome, and return to their landholdings to resume their former lives.

Reginald Horsley, writing sixteen years after the publication of *Maori and Settler*, prefers a different outcome to the war. Horsley makes no pretence to impartiality in his account of Te Kooti in his novel *In the Grip of the Hawk: A Story of the Maori Wars*. He states in his Prefatory Note that, 'While in no sense a history of a particular period of the war, the story is built upon a historical basis'.¹⁵ However, the historical basis on which it is built appears to be that of the book on New Zealand history written by Horsley himself for the aptly named 'Romance of Empire' series, which gives a colourful account of the New Zealand Wars, and refers to Te Kooti and his followers as 'fiends incarnate' and 'savage fanatics'.¹⁶ Not surprisingly, therefore, *In the Grip of the Hawk* depicts the Poverty Bay campaign in (literally) black and white terms, as a conflict between 'bad' Maori and 'good' Pakeha.

Horsley's sympathies are clear from this description of the first encounter between the two main characters:

As Englishman and Maori faced one another, they afforded admirable examples of opposite types. The one tall and superbly moulded, fair-haired and blue-eyed, and with winning frankness and generous high-mindedness in every line of his well-cut features; the other not quite so tall, but equally well made, with coal-black hair, furtive brown eyes, and an expression indicative of courage and intelligence, but also of a high degree of cunning.¹⁷

The narrator's grudging admiration for the Maori is tempered by reference to his furtive eyes and cunning expression, thus foreshadowing his later treachery; he may be courageous and intelligent, but ultimately he is morally suspect. The Englishman is twenty-year-old George who is a passenger on a ship taking supplies to the prisoners on the Chatham Islands. The capture of the ship and the ensuing events are closely based on the historical record, but Horsley changes Te Kooti's name to Te Karearea (which means sparrow-hawk, hence the title of the book) and uses the pretext that he is writing about a fictional rather than a real character to modify some of the facts. For example, an event which actually occurred – Te Kooti's sacrifice of his elderly uncle by throwing him overboard – becomes an opportunity for George to show his heroism by leaping into the sea and rescuing the old man from the jaws of the waiting sharks. Te Karearea thereupon has his uncle poisoned instead, but before his death the old man gives George an ancient greenstone mere which is reputed to

have magical powers. Te Karearea's subsequent attempts to get the mere back from George provide a useful ongoing plot device.

This is a fairly harmless fabrication on Horsley's part, but other episodes appear to have been invented to demonstrate the treachery of Maori in general and Te Karearea in particular. For instance, when the *Rifleman* reached New Zealand, Te Kooti released the crew unharmed and even paid them for their efforts, but in Horsley's version, Te Karearea's men murder the crew in cold blood. They then capture a British soldier by trickery and attempt to hang him, but are foiled by the intervention of George, whose nobility and honour are contrasted with the lack of these qualities in the Maori. The soldier rescued by George is none other than his close friend Terence, who, as a Briton, is also brave and honourable (though, being Irish, he is not quite as noble as English George, nor as tall and good-looking).

George and Terence are taken by Te Karearea to his pa, which is obviously based on Te Kooti's pa at Ngatapa, but with a much more resounding name – Pah O Te Mate – the Pah of the Slain, the Fortress of Death. Like Henty, Horsley makes Te Karearea's followers adherents of Pai Marire, and as such, they indulge in fearsome Hauhau rituals, and are bloodthirsty and unprincipled fighters. In one of their raids on Poverty Bay, based on the actual raid by Te Kooti, Te Karearea and his men kill a defenceless group of settlers, including women and children. George and Terence have hitherto remained in the pa because they have given their word that they will not try to escape, and 'The word of a gentleman, once passed, even to a "darned nigger", must be sacred';¹⁸ but this is more than they can bear.

They felt sick with horror; for the picture of those helpless, anguished mothers and their babes would obtrude itself. But at last George sprang up and shook his great shoulders, as if throwing off some fearful oppression.

"Terence," he said quietly, "till now, in spite of what I knew him to be capable of, I have had a sneaking sympathy for this ruffian, with his misfortunes, with his aspirations. I knew that his point of view must be different from ours. I was inclined to make allowances. But now – now –"

"I know," Terence said in a low voice. "It is – it is those babies."

George's strong teeth seemed to snap together. "Yes; and he shall answer for them to me." Then he went out into the night.¹⁹

‘The night’ here symbolizes both literal darkness, and the moral darkness of Te Kareraea’s savagery. Horsley’s use of emotive language ensures that any ‘sneaking sympathy’ his readers may have shared with George will be firmly at an end. George and Terence promptly escape from the pa, meet a party of Arawa, who are friendly to the Pakeha, and guide them into the pa by way of an underground passage they have discovered. The Arawa triumph, and George kills Te Karearea in single combat with the aid of the greenstone mere. The illustrations reinforce the black/white dichotomy of the text, with Te Karearea’s swarthy aspect and dark native garb contrasted with that of George, who is clad symbolically (if somewhat impractically) completely in white.



George turned from the mate to find Te Karearea at his elbow (page 79).

Illustration by W. Herbert Holloway for *In the Grip of the Hawk* by Reginald Horsley, p.79.

Much of the plot of *In the Grip of the Hawk* is based on real historical events, even to the names of actual British soldiers and settlers involved in various episodes, but the

author has so convincingly demonstrated the superiority of the British and the treachery of the Maori that no other ending is possible than the defeat of the evil-doers. Te Karearea cannot be allowed to escape, as the real-life Te Kooti did – he has to be killed, in order to punish his misdeeds and to assert Pakeha superiority. The death of Te Karearea/Te Kooti brings both narrative and historiographical closure, for with his death the issues raised by the campaign are at an end. Horsley rewrites history in order to uphold the imperialistic ethos in which he believes.

William Satchell's *The Greenstone Door* (1914), published only seven years after *In the Grip of the Hawk*, offers a considerably more balanced view of both Maori and the New Zealand Wars. The protagonist, Cedric Tregarthen, is brought up by his foster-parents, Purcell, a 'Pakeha-Maori' who lives among the Ngatimaniapoto at Matakiki in the Waikato, and his Maori wife. Cedric thus grows up with an intimate knowledge of Maori language and culture, and identifies himself with the Maori people: 'I remember to this hour the sense of loss and degradation that overwhelmed me with the knowledge that I was not of the Ngatimaniapoto, not even a Maori, but a member of a distant and alien race.'²⁰ He forms a close friendship with Rangiora, the son of the local high chief. He is not absorbed entirely into the Maori world, however; Purcell gives him a thorough education (which includes science as well as classical and modern languages), and when Cedric turns fifteen, he sends him to Auckland to experience the Pakeha world. There Cedric is befriended by the Governor, Sir George Grey, and falls in love with his ward, Helenora.

Cedric moves literally and figuratively between the Maori and Pakeha worlds and as, in a sense, an outsider in both, he is sufficiently clear-sighted to see the virtues and shortcomings of each culture. When war breaks out he is determined not to take sides, and is alarmed to hear that Purcell has espoused the cause of the Maori among whom he has lived for so long. Satchell spares Cedric the necessity of making a decision by having him held captive for seven months by Maori who fear that he will persuade Purcell not to fight. He escapes just in time to witness the battle of Orakau, and the deaths of his friend Rangiora and foster-sister, Puhi-Huia, who are among the defenders. (Satchell attributes the defiant, "We will fight against you for ever and for ever" to Rangiora.) Purcell is captured and shot as a traitor. Overcome by their loss,

Cedric has a mental breakdown, and by the time he is nursed back to health by Helenora, the Maori have been defeated and there are no longer any choices for him to make. This ultimately unsatisfactory ending is one example of the tension between the realistic elements of *The Greenstone Door* and the rather contrived and melodramatic romance plot.

The value of *The Greenstone Door* to the literature of the New Zealand wars is that it deals not so much with the actual conflict as with the relationship between Maori and Pakeha leading up to the war. It covers the period from the 1830s to 1860s which was a time of great cultural change for Maori. The book traces the passage of a specific Waikato iwi from the period of fierce intertribal warfare, cannibalism, and the pernicious influence of evil *tohunga* (the stock cultural stereotypes of the time); through the ‘halcyon time of the race’²¹ when there was peace and prosperity; to their decline as the result of the wars and diseases introduced by the Pakeha. *The Greenstone Door* traces the gradual deterioration of their relationship with the settlers, and though Satchell explores the complex motives on both sides, his attitude is fatalistic:

Its origin lay deeper than the acts, good or ill, of individual men; they might hasten or retard, even alter the method, but they could not affect the result. Clearly do I see now that human passions were but instruments of the Inevitable.²²

According to Satchell, even if war had not been waged, diseases and pests introduced by the European settlers would have been enough to bring about the end of traditional Maori life: ‘For a thousand who fell in the field, ten thousand withered in the airs that blew from the habitations of the white men.’²³ The social Darwinism Satchell believed in meant that ‘the Maori was doomed; [...]his best hope was extinction in the blood of the conqueror’;²⁴ in other words, assimilation through intermarriage. As Louise O’Brien observes, while Satchell ‘laments the destruction of the indigenous culture and [does] not welcome unconditionally the new order of white civilisation’, he views both processes as historically determined.²⁵

H. Louisa Bedford’s *Under One Standard or The Touch that Makes Us Kin: A Story of the Time of the Maori War* (1916) is, as mentioned in Chapter Four, set in Taranaki, and deals in part with the campaigns in that province. Like *The Greenstone*

Door, Under One Standard has a protagonist who has a Maori friend and who is relatively sympathetic to the Maori cause, although David, as an emigrant, is not as familiar with Maori life as Cedric. Bedford uses David's friend George, a nephew of Wiremu Kingi, to articulate the Maori perspective: "'Wi-Kingi asks why you come? He says, one day he and many others will sweep you into the sea.'" ²⁶ Uncle Jacob expresses the view of the settlers:

"If we do fight it will be to give those black men a lesson – teach them their place, you see."

"But the land was theirs," said Mary timidly.

"Theirs once, but much of it ours now – paid for honestly. It's the Land League that's done the mischief." ²⁷

He blames Wiremu Kingi, whom he denounces as a brute and a rogue, for stirring up the opposition to the settlers. Folkes expresses a more moderate viewpoint:

"Poor fellows, they will only fight for their rights, or what they believe to be their rights. I am a little afraid that we are muddling things out there. It's a question of land, you see. Some of the Maori want to sell to us and some want to keep it, and it is very difficult for us to know whose rights we are infringing." ²⁸

The other voice of moderation is Bishop Selwyn, who attempts to negotiate peace with little success. *Under One Standard* does not describe any actual fighting, but rather the effect of the war on ordinary people. David's family, along with many other settlers, are forced to leave their farms to be plundered and burnt by the Maori, and have to crowd into the township of New Plymouth for safety. David's sister Mary is delighted to be able to leave the dangers of New Zealand and return to England, but the conflict has the opposite effect on David and Folkes, both of whom become missionaries and work among the Maori to try and heal the rifts created by the war. Both *Under One Standard* and *The Greenstone Door* were published during the First World War, and it is possible that their comparatively moderate stance reflects the ethos of the time, when racial differences were subsumed in a common patriotism in the face of an external enemy. *The Greenstone Door* was poorly received when it was published in 1914, possibly because its ambiguous attitude to conflict was not in accord with the jingoism of the time.

Mona Tracy's *Rifle and Tomahawk* (1927), like *Maori and Settler* and *In the Grip of the Hawk*, is based on Te Kooti's campaigns in Poverty Bay, but differs from the

earlier books by focusing on children rather than adult characters. As in Tracy's *Lawless Days* (discussed in Chapter Three), the protagonists are an English boy and girl and their Maori friend; in this case, fifteen-year-old Ron Cameron, and his thirteen-year-old sister Isbel, the children of English settlers, and their friend Hori te Whiti, the son of the local chief, 'a splendid specimen of courageous Maori youth'.²⁹ The story opens on 9 November 1868, the day of Te Kooti's devastating raids on the Poverty Bay settlements, and the ensuing events, while faithful to historical accounts, are told from the viewpoint of the fictional characters. Hori warns Ron and Isbel, whose parents are away from home, about the impending Hauhau attack, and they escape with their two-year-old brother Hughie. They become separated, but eventually reach safety, with the help of Hori and their neighbour, the bushman Jock Abler, and are instrumental in rescuing Mrs Wilson (here called Mrs Johnson) and her son.³⁰ Ron becomes a messenger for the newly-formed Forest Rangers and takes part in the subsequent campaigns against Te Kooti. Events take a melodramatic turn when Isbel is captured by the Hauhau and taken to Te Kooti's pa at Ngatapa, but Ron, Jock and Hori stage a thrilling rescue by means of a secret tunnel. This is reminiscent of *In the Grip of the Hawk*, while the way Isbel avoids death by placing herself under the chief's cloak has echoes of *The Greenstone Door*. The stirring tale ends with both Ron and Isbel receiving medals for their bravery and Jock being revealed as the long-lost Laird of Clan MacBean.

In *Rifle and Tomahawk*, Tracy closely followed the historical version of the Poverty Bay campaigns that was current at the time she was writing (though, as noted, this has since been challenged by Belich and Binney). Her attitude to Maori is very much of her time, with a clear division between 'bad' Maori who oppose the Pakeha, and 'good' Maori who support them. This is exemplified in the portrayal of Hori te Whiti, who is presented as a hero for his role in aiding Ron and Isbel, and for passing on information about the Hauhau to the British forces through Ron. His betrayal of the Hauhau whom he pretends to be supporting is seen to be praiseworthy, rather than reprehensible, as it is done with the best of motives, as Ron explains:

"Some people will say [...] that the Hauhaus are all bad. [...] But I know that among them there are good men, who only need encouragement to become loyal subjects of the Queen. What would you say if I were to tell you that I know of one man who joined Te Kooti because his tribe were Te Kooti's allies, who fought

with them, and was hunted with them, because he knew that by so doing he would one day be a leader among them, and so bring them into pakeha ways of living? I know of such a Maori. He has done so much for the pakehas that it is he who should be wearing this medal and not myself.”³¹

Hori has another motive as well – his love for Isbel; a love which, according to Tracy, must never be requited.

“She will never dream, I hope, that she is the star whose white fire leads Hori onward, to brave the desperate doom of an outlaw in order that he may one day stand forth among his own people, and have her know that he did right.”

“But...but – ” stammered the bewildered Ron.

“Maori and pakeha walk by different ways.” Hori seemed to interpret Ron’s very thoughts. “But that shall not prevent the one having a silent love for the other – and mine will always be a silent love, Roni – you may be sure of that!”³²

Betty Gilderdale appended an ‘Editor’s Note’ to the 1983 edition of *Rifle and Tomahawk*, in which she explains to modern readers that some of the attitudes in the book are no longer acceptable. However she adds that, ‘If there is any overall message, it is a perennial one: that friendship is stronger than politics, that violence leads only to worse violence, and that in any war the real sufferers are the innocent.’³³

It was not until 1954, twenty-seven years after *Rifle and Tomahawk*, that another children’s book about the New Zealand wars appeared. Ronald Syme, a former teacher, laments in the foreword to *Gipsy Michael* that few New Zealand schools teach national history, and he seeks to redress this by incorporating as many historical events as possible into this book. Fourteen-year-old Michael runs away from his home in England in 1862 and takes passage on the *Frigate Bird*, a ship bound for New Zealand. Within a very short space of time he has a narrow escape when the ship is attacked and burnt by Maori (an incident based on the burning of the *Boyd* in 1809); discovers gold on the West Coast and captures the men who committed the Maungatapu murders (which happened in 1866); joins the militia and fights at the battle of Orakau (1864); meets Carl Volckner shortly before he is murdered (1865); is on the ship *Rifleman* when it is commandeered by Te Kooti in 1866 and helps to sail him and his followers back to New Zealand; and is captured by cannibalistic Hauhau. The book ends with Michael and his shipmates preparing to leave for the South Seas, which in view of their experiences in New Zealand would appear to be a wise move.



Illustration of Te Kooti by William Stobbs for *Gipsy Michael* by Ronald Syme, p.139.

Syme notes in his Foreword that many of the events in this book actually occurred and he gives a reasonably faithful account of individual episodes, but the confused chronology and the unlikelihood of any one person being present at quite so many significant historical occasions undermines the book's credibility. Syme presents the New Zealand wars from an English perspective. He distinguishes between the New Zealand settlers, who are described as 'land-sharks' who 'are keen to grab as much land as possible and they don't mind how they get it',³⁴ and the British troops, who admire the Maori's fighting prowess and are reluctant to fight against 'a decent race of natives'.³⁵ One of the militiamen says:

"They have a great chivalry, these Maoris, that is worthy of the great medieval days of knighthood. A woeful day it was for both our races when this crazy war began. Had we shown more justice, had they checked their fighting spirit, we might have lived together in friendship for ever."³⁶

Michael is present at the battle of Orakau, having been drafted into the militia, and Syme attributes to him the action of the sentry who pretended not to have seen a young Maori woman who had come out of the pa in search of water. She expresses

her gratitude by later rescuing Michael and his two shipmates from the Hauhau who plan to kill and eat them.

Syme's account of Te Kooti's capture of the *Rifleman*, the trip to New Zealand, and the sacrifice of Te Kooti's elderly uncle are faithful to historic accounts. Syme departs from actual events only by having Te Kooti briefly hold Michael and two of his shipmates hostage. The Te Kooti portrayed by Syme is very different from Horsley's villainous Te Karearea; in part because the book deals only with the escape from the Chathams and not the later fighting. Though Michael and his friends are horrified when Te Kooti drowns his uncle, they have a grudging admiration for his abilities, and their ambivalent attitude is summed up in their comments as they take their leave of him:

Joe looked after him with a thoughtful expression on his face.

"If he wasn't such a cruel devil, I'd feel almost sorry..."

"When the Government hangs him," Dick interrupted.³⁷

Syme is one of the few authors who does not call Te Kooti's followers Hauhau, and distinguishes between Pai-marire and Te Kooti's religious sect.

R. A. Owens' *Muskets and Trouble* (1964) is a rather far-fetched story set in the early days of the Wellington settlement. Colonel Wakefield arouses the enmity of the traders who are selling muskets to the Maori by issuing an edict against the musket trade. The traders retaliate by stirring up Maori tribes to attack the settlers and force them from their homes, leading to a conflict which is resolved only by the arrival of 'Good Governor Grey' and his troops. The hero and narrator is Robert Merley, the son of Scottish settlers, who is fourteen when the story opens in 1842. The dramatic plot moves from Wellington to Nelson, Wanganui to Kapiti, and back to Wellington over a period of four years, as Robert manages to be in the thick of the action, sometimes disguised as a Maori, and with his faithful Maori friend Tama at his side. Robert is often conveniently in the right place to overhear the traders plotting, or to see where they are hiding their arms, and he is instrumental in rounding up the villains and saving the life of Governor Grey. He does suffer some setbacks – he and Tama are kept in captivity for months by the traders, and he is wounded several times – but he survives to be rewarded by Governor Grey with a piece of land and a house,

and settles down to raise a family with Lucy, the lovely young Scottish girl he has met during his adventures. Tama's reward is, as Gilderdale notes, rather ironic; he is given a new musket every year, with all the powder and shot he requires, 'which, considering that the theme of the book is the trouble caused by natives having muskets, seems rather inappropriate'.³⁸ Tama's tribe, the Ngati-Awa, who supported the settlers, are given an annual gift of tobacco.

Muskets and Trouble has some basis in fact, as the incident in which a number of Europeans (including Captain Wakefield) were killed at Wairau in 1843, the armed clashes between the Wellington settlers and Ngati Toa in 1846, and Grey's seizure of Te Rauparaha, all of which feature in the book, did actually occur. However, as the author acknowledges in his Foreword, 'much liberty has been taken with the true course of history and certain elements, particularly the extent of the traders' activities, have been invented solely for the purpose of the story'.³⁹ Owens makes the cause of the conflict, not the dispute over land sales, as was actually the case, but the actions of the unscrupulous 'traders, land-grabbers, and Pakeha-Maoris'⁴⁰ who sell muskets to the Maori. 'The many uncouth and profiteering musket-traders continued to satisfy their greed, uncaring that they were placing the settlers' lives in jeopardy.'⁴¹ Unlike Syme, who sees the settlers as greedy land-sharks, Owens presents them as heroic and deserving of success: 'The dogged courage of the settlers in the face of danger and hardship finally won through, and their colony is now the capital city of New Zealand.'⁴² The right of the colonists to the land they occupy is never questioned, and Edward Gibbon Wakefield is presented as a champion of the oppressed who 'took up the cause of the poverty-stricken people and persuaded them to seek a new life in the fertile land of New Zealand'.⁴³

Owens has a very simplistic view of nineteenth century New Zealand society. He makes a clear distinction between the 'good' Maori who help the settlers, and the 'bad' Maori, 'the war-crazed Ngati-toas',⁴⁴ who assist the musket traders. The Pakeha are also divided between good (the settlers) and bad (the musket traders). (The Pakeha-Maori, however, are uniformly villainous.) There is an underlying assumption of Pakeha superiority, perhaps best displayed in the portrayal of Tama. Although Tama is brave and resourceful and has to rescue Robert on numerous

occasions, there is never any doubt that it is Robert and not Tama who is the hero of the story. This is reinforced by placing Robert as the first-person narrator, and also by the fact that Tama (like George in *Under One Standard*) speaks very poor English, which makes him seem less intelligent. It is interesting to note that Robert, in spite of spending long periods living among Maori, does not learn to speak their language. Clearly, Owens' sympathies, unlike those of Roderick Finlayson, lay firmly with the Pakeha settlers.

Finlayson's *The Springing Fern* (1965, but previously published as a series of Primary School Bulletins) has similarities to *The Greenstone Door*, in that it gives a Maori view of the Waikato war, but in this case not mediated through a Pakeha character. As mentioned in Chapter Three, *The Springing Fern* is focalized entirely by its Maori protagonists, namely the members of one chiefly family. In the chapters dealing with the war, Hira, the chief's son, has reached adulthood, and the 'golden age' of peace and prosperity experienced by the tribe during his youth comes to an abrupt end when he and his people are forced from their land in north Waikato because of their support for the Maori king. They live in exile in the King Country while the war devastates the countryside.

War had seared and destroyed the fruitful lands until it seemed to the Maori that all hope was lost, and scattered bands of men and women fled before the Queen's soldiers. Just as Hira had warned his father, the pakeha sun had grown too fierce and had burnt the land.⁴⁵

The confiscation of their land is hard to bear, and the people grow disheartened and bitter, convinced that the Pakeha are using the war as an excuse to seize the fertile land they covet. The dispossessed tribes are disillusioned with the Pakeha, and many turn to the Hauhau religion which promises to drive the Pakeha into the sea. Some of the Waikato warriors join Titikowaru in Taranaki, and a number are killed in an attack on the redoubt at Turuturu-mokai, among them Hira, who was to have been the leader of his people.

Finlayson goes on to explore the aftermath of the war in the Waikato:

The fighting petered out, but there were still two parts in one country – the Maori kingdom, and that of the pakeha. [...] On one side were the pioneer settlers on the confiscated lands, in their lonely homesteads with their lonely children, amid the smoking trees of the burnt bush. [...] On the other side was the unfriendly Maori

shut in his last stronghold, the grim green forests where wary hunters snared the remnant of once plentiful native birds and spied out upon the settlers' world.⁴⁶

When the survivors of Hira's tribe are finally allowed to go back to their ancestral lands, they find that the best land has been taken over by Pakeha farms and they have to settle on the poorer scrubland. 'So began the new times, the times of poverty for the Maori amid the flourishing pakeha farms.'⁴⁷ Hira's son, in spite of his good education, becomes a foreman of the Maori road gang for the local County Council. 'Paora had been three years as St Stephen's School and he was chief of all the people of Wairoa, but in the eyes of the County Council he was chief over only three men.'⁴⁸ Although Paora's daughter Ana is inspired by Princess Te Puea to improve the tribe's way of living, they never regain the prosperity of pre-war times. Finlayson is the only author who goes beyond the actual conflicts to show the long-lasting effects of the war on the Maori people.

In contrast to *The Springing Fern*, with its reliance on historical records and sympathy for the Maori cause, *Fire in the Bracken* by S.C. George (1966) tells a far-fetched tale of an entirely fictional battle and depicts Maori as foolishly quixotic and easily led. As one settler remarks, "'I've been able to keep 'em sweet, but one silly fool could upset them and start fire in the bracken.'"⁴⁹ Jim is warned by his Maori friend Tiapora that, "'There is trouble everywhere. [The escaped convict] Despard started it. He has spread the lie that the *pakeha* means to steal our land, and now many of the good Maoris, as well as the bad, are against the white man.'"⁵⁰ It is notable that Tiapora sees pro-Pakeha Maori as good and those who oppose them as bad; and that he dismisses as a lie the idea that Pakeha want to take Maori land. Jim and his fellow settlers are besieged in a stockade, but their Maori attackers help to drive cattle to the stockade so the settlers can eat, as it is no honour to fight hungry men. They take chivalry to absurd extremes by offering to provide powder and bullets, sending a letter with rules for the conduct of the war, and even making a road to their pa so that the settlers can more easily attack. The assault by Maori on the settlers' stockade is pictured as the reverse of Orakau – after the settlers repulse the initial attack, the Maori offer to stop fighting if their lands are restored, but the settlers refuse. The Maori then offer safe conduct to the women and children. The women opt to stay and the stockade is attacked again, but is saved by a relief force of

soldiers who subsequently defeat the Maori at their pa. Most of the Maori make peace but one (unnamed) tribe continues fighting. Jim, as the interpreter for the government, manages to negotiate peace between the tribe and the settlers. As noted in Chapter Five, the author is concerned more with telling a dramatic story than with historical accuracy.

Children of the Forest: A Frontier Tale of Old Taranaki (1966) by Arthur. H. Messenger, is a fairly slight book (only 54 pages long), and is one of the 'Stories of New Zealand' series reprinted from the *School Journal*.⁵¹ (The stories were originally written in 1951 and published in the *School Journal* in 1952.) As a child, the author lived at the Pukearuhe redoubt in Taranaki, the youngest of twelve children of the garrison commander, Captain Messenger. He gives a lively first-hand account of life in one of the frontier outposts established to protect New Plymouth from invasion by hostile Maori. Although it is set in the early 1880s, some years after the war in Taranaki officially ended, the narrative reveals the settlers' continuing fear that hostilities could resume at any time. The garrison employs Maori scouts to inform them of the movements of the Hauhau, and on one of their excursions into the bush, the garrison children encounter a scout who has been shot by the Hauhau. He reports that:

a large body of Waikato warriors was going to try to force a way past the Pukearuhe defences in order to reach Parikaha and join the rebel leader, Te Whiti.

The Captain had received definite orders from the Government to prevent any such movement on the part of the Waikato tribe, and so preparations were immediately made to stop the men from passing. Naturally every boy in the garrison was wildly excited about the affair and determined to see as much of it as possible.⁵²

To make it even more exciting, the leader of the warriors is the chief Te Wetere, who had led an earlier raid on Pukearuhe in which all the occupants were killed and the blockhouse burnt down. It is not surprising that the author, the son of the current garrison commander, should find him a 'sinister-looking figure'.⁵³ Messenger's drawing of the meeting between the Waikato warriors and the soldiers suggests that the confrontation is not as exciting as the boys had hoped; although the garrison wall in the background is bristling with armed soldiers, the actual encounter appears to be a discussion between a small group of Maori and an unarmed Captain Messenger.

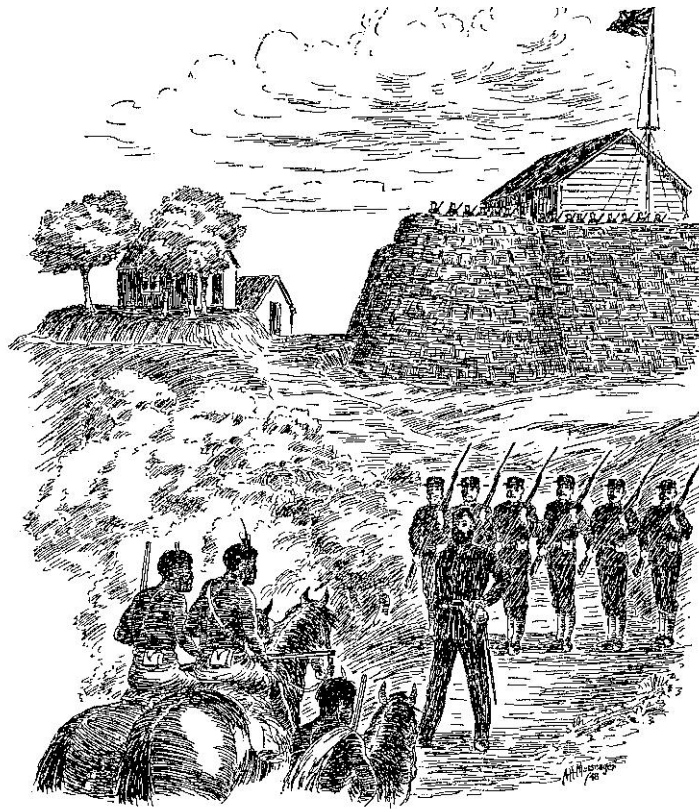


Illustration by A. H. Messenger for *The Children of the Forest*, p. 36.

On this occasion, and several subsequent attempts, the Waikato warriors are deterred by the garrison's show of force, and retreat northwards.

Then came the dramatic seizure of Parihaka, and the capture of the chief Te Whiti by a force of militia and volunteers; and this put an end to the hopes of the northern tribes to start a revolt in southern Taranaki. Life at Pukearuhe returned to normal, and again we were allowed to wander on the beach and in the forest.⁵⁴

Messenger's comments reflect the way Te Whiti and Parihaka were regarded at the time; and, in fact, *Children of the Forest* was originally written several years before Dick Scott's *Ask That Mountain: The Story of Parihaka* (1954), which gives a rather different interpretation of these events. Despite this, Messenger is generally sympathetic to Maori; he describes them as 'descendants of those daring navigators who had discovered this land which the pakeha were now wresting from them. Was it any wonder that the Maoris had fought to keep it.'⁵⁵ One of his closest childhood friends is a boy from Pukearuhe pa, Maui Pomare (who later became the first Maori doctor, was appointed Minister of Health in 1923, and was knighted). There is a fascinating description of a feast at the pa to which all the local Pakeha are invited,

and where the theme of the speeches is the need for the two races to work together for the good of Aotearoa. Another interesting aspect of the feast is the sheer volume of food consumed, including a whole roasted bullock, vast quantities of seafood, and 'literally hundreds of pigeons, kakas, tuis, and blue-wattled crows'.⁵⁶ Vivid details such as this, augmented by black and white illustrations by the author, help bring the period to life.

Unlike Messenger, Elsie Locke cannot describe the historical periods in which her novels are set from first-hand observation; instead she relies on her meticulous research to convey a feeling of the historical setting. *The End of the Harbour* (1968) also gives an excellent sense of the physical setting, as Locke grew up in Waiuku, at the southern end of the Manukau Harbour, where the action takes place, and was consequently very familiar with the area. The story is set in 1860, at a time when the election of Potatau as the Maori king and fears that the fighting in Taranaki might spread to other parts of the country were creating uncertainty and tension between the Pakeha settlers and Maori. In Waiuku, Maori and Pakeha co-exist quite happily on the whole in spite of instances of prejudice on both sides, but events such as the murder of a Maori by a colonist at Patumahoe cause the relationship to deteriorate. Locke traces the attempts by well-meaning people of both races to prevent the outbreak of hostilities, culminating in the visit by a deputation of seven Maori chiefs to Governor Gore Browne. The chiefs hope that they can be, if not a dove with an olive branch, then the Maori equivalent, 'a flock of silver-eyes' who will bring peace by negotiating between the Governor and the Taranaki Maori. The failure of their mission means that conflict is probably unavoidable, though the book ends before any actual fighting occurs.

As in her other books, Locke uses a mixture of real and invented characters. Most of the adult characters are real people, and Locke based her portrayal of them on information provided by their descendants, as well as on extensive written and oral resources. They are people who played important roles in the little settlement of Waiuku – Ed Constable, the major local landowner; Arch Campbell, the manager of the Kentish Hotel; Captain Champion, whose boat, the *Betsy*, transported cargo and passengers between Waiuku and Onehunga; the town's doctor George Topp; and

local Maori chiefs, Te Katipa and Aihepene. Doctor Topp is a particularly interesting character. A former army doctor who served in Crimea, he treats not only the Pakeha settlers, but the Maori, who respect him because he has learned their language and honours their customs. He is a forthright critic of Government policies, and also a heavy drinker who is often intoxicated, though this seemingly does not impair his ability to treat patients.

Locke makes the story more interesting for young readers by focalizing it through a fictional protagonist, eleven-year-old David Learmouth. David's parents, newly arrived in New Zealand, obtain work at the Kentish Hotel, and David quickly settles into life in Waiuku. He gets a job assisting Doctor Topp, helps out Captain Champion on the *Betsy*, and has his first opportunity to go to school and learn to read. He becomes friendly with Honatana, a missionary-educated Maori boy, who says that because of their names – David and Jonathan – they are 'twigs of a tree'.⁵⁷ David learns to speak Maori, and through his work with Doctor Topp and his friendship with Honatana, he is able to gain an understanding of the Maori perspective of the situation; both the viewpoint of those who wish to drive out the Pakeha by force, and the moderate stand of those seeking reconciliation between the races. He also encounters a variety of attitudes among the Pakeha: from those who support the Maori; to those, like his mother, who are scared of the 'natives', largely through ignorance; and those who are actively hostile. Locke's attempts to represent the different viewpoints and to provide an accurate account of the incidents leading up to the outbreak of fighting in the Waikato occasionally slow down the action, and at times the text is a little too earnest in its endeavours to be evenhanded. Nevertheless, *The End of the Harbour* 'casts new light on old disputes',⁵⁸ concluding that the trouble essentially arises from the different attitudes Maori and Pakeha have to the land.

The illustrations by Maori artist Katarina Mataira underline the theme of the text; for example, the frontispiece juxtaposes the houses of the settlers with a Maori canoe, and shows groups of Maori and settlers facing each other in a way that suggests separation or even confrontation, while in the foreground Honatana clasps David's shoulder, signifying that friendship is possible between the races on a personal level.

It is noteworthy that in contrast to the illustrations in earlier texts, in which Maori were pictured as very dark, in Mataira's illustrations there is no difference in colour between Maori and Pakeha, so that differences are minimized.



Frontispiece by Katarina Mataira for *The End of the Harbour* by Elsie Locke.

Although the ending is sombre, as it is clear that war is now unavoidable, the final paragraph gives a note of hope, indicating that the friendship between David and Honatana, and the land itself, will survive no matter what the outcome of the conflict may be:

“I know what I think,” said David with a sudden fierceness. “I am laced with you, like the threads on the *korowai*, and I can’t be pulled out again. And they can’t make me fight you either, Honatana, because the Lord is between me and thee, and between my seed and thy seed, for ever.”

“Ae,” said Honatana. “We are twigs of a tree, and the twigs grow tangled together.”

Aihepene had paused on the brow of the hill. He stretched out the arm holding the *taiaha* and turned it, pointing in every direction. Behind him the northern sky was silver, to the west it was gold, and its radiance touched the high tops of the forest. Below him the wide harbour lay soft and silent.

“It doesn’t seem real, that they’ve taken his land from him,” whispered David. “I don’t think they ever *can*.”⁵⁹

This sentiment is echoed in Ron Bacon’s time-slip novel *Again, the Bugles Blow* (1973). “‘It is not our land to hold with the hand [...] but to hold with the heart it is our land always, for to hold with the heart is to hold for ever.’”⁶⁰ This is what Rua’s grandmother tells Rua when she recounts the story of their people’s stand against the red coats at Orakau. Her grandfather Ruarangi fought at Orakau and, according to family legend, his life was saved by a young boy who was never seen again. Shortly after hearing this story, Rua has a fall, and when he recovers consciousness he has been transported back to 1863. The conflict David and Honatana feared is about to begin, and Rua, living in the Auckland barracks as the servant of one of the British soldiers, Lieutenant Anderson, naturally hears the soldiers’ views on the war – that the Maori have to be chased out ‘to stop them killing and murdering our white people’, and that:

“There’s more and more settlers coming and they’ve got to have somewhere to live. There’s plenty of land down in the Waikato, plenty for everyone, and if the natives try to keep us out, then we’ll have to chase ’em out, and that’ll give us even more land.”⁶¹

Rua hears all about the various engagements as they take place, and eventually, when Lieutenant Anderson is posted on field duty in the Waikato, he experiences the campaigns at first hand, though he is not involved in the actual fighting. He witnesses the soldiers’ gradual disillusionment with the war, exemplified in the account one soldier gives of the destruction of Rangiaowhia, which was a centre of Maori horticultural production:

“We came down over the hills and there was Rangiaowhia, just like a garden farm, with fields of wheat and corn and potatoes all lying to the sun, with orchards of fruit trees. [...] And there was steeples of churches, two of them, built by the missionaries, and there was a flour mill and thatched huts, all pretty and peaceful like a picture.”⁶²

The soldier describes the battle, and the bravery of the Maori who kept fighting even when grossly outnumbered, and concludes: “‘And when I left this afternoon, I stopped on the hills and looked back at Rangiaowhia and it wasn’t pretty anymore. It

was just fire and smoke and burning, with the gardens and the fruit trees gone, lost in the fire and smoke.’”⁶³ Bacon uses the perspective of an ordinary man, ‘history from below’, to present a view which is at variance with official military accounts.



Illustration by V. J. Livingstone for *Again, the Bugles Blow* by R. L. Bacon, p.96.

The inhumanity of the soldiers’ attack on the peaceful village is reinforced by the accompanying illustration of this engagement, which shows soldiers shooting near (possibly at) a church, even though this is not mentioned in the text.

When the soldiers reach Orakau, Rua contrives to get into the pa, as he wants to be near his ancestor, Ruarangi. He sees for himself the pitiable state of the defenders, most of them wounded, all of them thirsty, so short of ammunition that they have to creep out of the pa to take the cartridge belts from the dead soldiers and make wooden bullets, but still defiantly refusing to surrender. Rua sees one of the warriors about to be shot by a red coat, pushes him out of the way of the bullet, and realizes that he has saved his ancestor Ruarangi’s life. The story ends abruptly with Rua finding himself back in his own time.

Writing *Again, the Bugles Blow* as a time-slip novel allows Bacon to have a protagonist who, like the presumed child reader, has little knowledge of the situation in New Zealand in the 1860s. As Rua, by observing and asking questions, finds out about colonial life and the cause and course of the Waikato war, so the reader, too, is given the necessary information. Although Rua is Maori, Bacon positions him as a

fairly neutral figure; he does not really belong with the British soldiers he is working for because of his race, but neither does he belong with the Maori, as his modern urban up-bringing has made him more like the Pakeha (he speaks English and knows about the Great Wall of China and how to wash dishes). It is only at the end of the book, when he is at Orakau, that he starts to identify with the Maori defenders, and even then his inability to communicate with them means he is not truly one of them. Bacon is thus able to present a number of different viewpoints. The time-slip device emphasizes both connectedness, and the disjunction and cultural dislocation experienced by Maori as a result of colonization. In *Again, the Bugles Blow*, Bacon has achieved the difficult feat of writing an account of the New Zealand wars which is not only exciting, but also balanced and true to historical records.

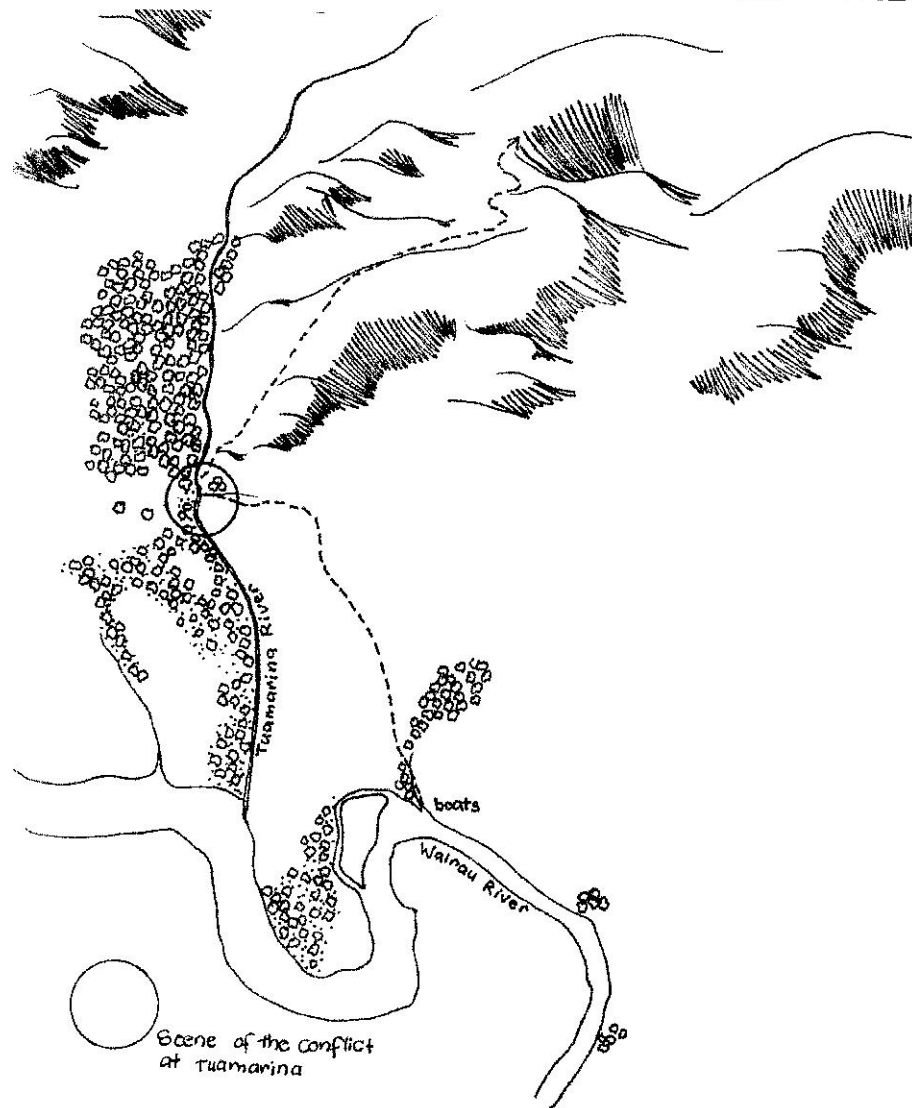
The same cannot be said of *The Forest Rangers* (1979) by G. K. Saunders, which is set at the same time – 1863 – and has the same subject – the war in the Waikato. Saunders was a radio and television script writer, and this no doubt influenced the form of the narrative, a fast paced and action-packed plot consisting of a series of dramatic episodes. The characters, too, seem to be chosen with a view to how they would appear on screen; they include, for example, a huge negro, a small garrulous Welshman, a red-faced, bewhiskered English Colonel, a one-eyed gun smuggler, and a stately tattooed Maori chief; all described in visual terms but with no depth of characterization. The story concerns fourteen-year-old Tom Kennedy who, after a Maori attack on his home which leaves his father dead and his older brother a prisoner, becomes a member of Captain von Tempsky's Forest Rangers. In this capacity he takes part in several military engagements, and is involved in a number of other exciting adventures, such as assisting in the capture of the arms smuggler, and saving the life of Rata, the son of the Maori chief Hikurangi, by pleading his case before Governor Grey.

The author begins his Introduction to *The Forest Rangers* with a question; 'How true is it?'⁶⁴ The answer, unfortunately, is hardly at all. Saunders states that 'ordinary history books' written by scholars are pretty dull, and that 'we have to use our imagination to fill in the gaps left by historians'.⁶⁵ Saunders, however, has gone well beyond 'filling in the gaps'; he has written his own version of events which bears

little resemblance to what actually happened. The Waikato war is presented as a brief campaign in which the inefficient British troops have to rely on the Forest Rangers to rescue them from Maori attacks. Captain von Tempsky is a brave, daring and resourceful commander, in direct contrast to the self-important and grossly incompetent Colonel Gilchrist, who is given to boasting that the British military is superior to ‘a few damned natives’.⁶⁶ The most serious distortion of historical facts is in the depiction of the siege of the pa to which the Maori have retreated under the leadership of their chief, Hikurangi. The pa is clearly meant to represent Orakau – the pa is unfinished, the defenders suffer from a lack of water, and they respond to the offer of a truce by declaring that they will fight on and on, and that their women and children will do likewise. However, the fight lasts for less than a day, as Tom, who is in the pa, persuades Hikurangi to surrender. Governor Grey arrives, and peace is declared, with no conditions other than that the chiefs sign a declaration of loyalty to the Queen. “I impose no penalties; there shall be no confiscation of lands, nor fines, nor punishment of any kind.”⁶⁷ Possibly the author is thinking of the meeting between Hone Heke and Grey at the end of the Northern War, but in any event, he totally misrepresents both the actual siege of Orakau and the outcome and aftermath of the war. The book ends with Hikurangi rebuilding Tom’s house which had been burnt down in the Maori attack, and the imminent betrothal of Tom’s older brother and Hikurangi’s beautiful daughter.

As well as creating the erroneous impression that the Waikato war ended with peace and reconciliation between the races, and denying the large scale land confiscations, *The Forest Rangers* sends mixed messages to its readers. The British troops are wrong for fighting the Maori, while the Forest Rangers, who also fight the Maori, are heroes. The ‘hostile Maori’ who kill Tom’s father are bad, while Hikurangi and his people, who also fight the Pakeha, are good. Presumably for Saunders telling an exciting story was paramount, and he was not overly concerned about the historical accuracy of his tale. The Introduction gives information about George Grey and von Tempsky, and says that other historical characters also appear under different names, implying that what is written about these characters is factual. However, this is far from the case, and it is unfortunate that the author does not acknowledge just how much of his story is pure fabrication.

Elsie Locke goes to the opposite extreme in *Journey Under Warning* (1983), to the extent of listing at the end of the book an impressive range of resources used in her research, and stating that detailed notes about her interpretation of events have been filed with the book's publisher and major reference libraries.⁶⁸ The 'Historical Notes' at the end of the book indicate the fictitious characters, and the few instances where the author has departed from the known facts. This information is elaborated on in the Reference Notes, which also give detailed biographies of all the historical characters, and an extensive bibliography. Maps in the text showing the actual places where the events of the story occurred add to the feeling of verisimilitude.



Map by Libby Plumridge for *Journey Under Warning* by Elsie Locke, p.147.

Journey Under Warning concerns the ill-fated expedition to survey the Wairau Plain in 1843, an episode of particular interest to Locke because her great-grandfather, William Morrison, was one of the surveyors. Morrison was aged twenty-six at the time, and a widower with a young child, not an especially appealing protagonist for a book for children. Locke therefore tells the story from the viewpoint of fifteen-year-old Gibby Banks, who accompanied the surveyors as camp boy, in charge of doing the cooking and looking after the camp.⁶⁹ Will Morrison, however, who acts as Gibby's mentor and friend, is the real hero - knowledgeable, level-headed, and sympathetic to the Maori. He alone of the survey party respects the Maori claim to the Wairau land, and he is uneasy about the possible repercussions of the surveyors' actions. He urges moderation in their dealings with the Maori who disrupt the survey, in contrast to the attitude of most of his companions. Will's forebodings are realized, but although he is present at the confrontation between Captain Wakefield's party and the Maori under Te Rauparaha and Te Rangihaeata, he manages to escape unharmed, with some help from Gibby, and is reunited with his little boy.

The account of the Wairau survey is interwoven with that of a family of Scottish settlers, the McGlones, who live near Nelson and become the foster parents of Will's son Billy. The antics of the lively family of four children provide light relief from the serious main story; and the sub-plot also allows Locke to explore the situation of the settlers who immigrated to Nelson under the aegis of the New Zealand Company. Unlike the author of *Muskets and Trouble* who portrayed the Wakefields as philanthropists providing a new life for underprivileged Britons, Locke is critical of their dealings with both the settlers and the Maori. Mr McGlone was promised work as a blacksmith, but instead he has to support his family by building roads in Nelson, while his wife and children struggle to survive in a little cob cottage eight miles out of town. The New Zealand Company's land policies are also criticized:

“’Twas foolishness for them to sell all that land in London afore anyone's measured the amount of land that's fit to be farmed. They've sold more land than they possess, and there's the long and short of it. So we must gang to the Wairau to satisfy the buyers, whether the Wairau be rightly theirs or no.”⁷⁰

Locke's determination to be both scrupulously fair and historically accurate is not always compatible with the demands of writing an entertaining book for children; as

Gilderdale observes, ‘Locke’s novels are closer, perhaps, to historical documentary than fiction’.⁷¹ Nevertheless, *Journey Under Warning* provides a balanced account of the only fatal armed clash between Maori and Pakeha in the South Island.

Anne de Roo has written the only historical fiction for children about the Northern War – *Jacky Nobody* (1983) and its sequel *The Bats’ Nest* (1986). De Roo’s historical novels, like those of Locke, are distinguished by the depth of their research and their sensitivity to the Maori point of view. The protagonist of both these books is Jacky Nolan, the son of an English sailor and a Maori mother. He has been brought up by missionaries and thinks of himself as English, and the discovery of his mixed parentage leads to a crisis of identity; the more so when he realizes that he is related to Hone Heke, whose anti-British sentiments are causing unease among the local residents. When Heke cuts down the flagstaff at Kororareka, tensions between Pakeha and Maori rise, and Jacky is torn between the two conflicting sides. As his loyalties vacillate, he divides his time between his home on the mission station, the grog shop in Kororareka owned by the father of his friend Noah Miggs, and Heke’s pa where his mother Ripeka lives. At each place he hears a different view: the missionaries want peace; the inhabitants of Kororareka want the soldiers to come and deal with Heke; and Heke wants to stop the influx of Pakeha settlers:

“This is the meaning of the flagstaff, that the Pakehas have made us their servants, that more and more Pakehas will come to take our land and make us servants. This will happen while the flag flies on Maiki Hill as a sign. They take our lands and where do we go? The Pakehas have other lands across the sea, but where are the lands of the Maori? Where does the Maori keep the graves of his ancestors? Where are the tracks the Maori have made across the hills, the forests where he has snared birds, the valleys where he has planted his crops? Where are the Maori lands but here, here where the flagstaff rises as a sign that the Pakehas will take our lands and make us all, all servants?”⁷²

While Jacky occupies the middle ground, struggling to understand where he fits in, his friends Matiu and Noah represent opposing views. Noah has little understanding of the true situation and thinks fighting will be an exciting game, while Matiu, Jacky’s cousin, older and educated by the missionaries, advocates peace and does his best to keep Jacky out of harm’s way. The book ends with the final assault on the flagstaff which results in the burning and sacking of Kororareka. Matiu is killed protecting Noah, and Noah and his father join the other residents fleeing to Auckland.

Knowing that war is now inevitable, Jacky makes his choice and goes to join his mother.

The Bats' Nest begins several months later, with the British attack on Heke's pa at Puketutu, and follows the course of the Northern War, culminating in the assault on Kawiti's pa at Ruapekapeka (the Maori word for a bats' nest). De Roo's reconstruction of events is faithful to historical sources, and provides a balanced account of the individual engagements and of the war as a whole. (The reason she gives for Ruapekapeka being deserted when the British forces attack – that most of the defenders were outside the pa holding a Sunday service – was generally accepted at the time *The Bats' Nest* was written, but has since been questioned by Belich, who attributes it to strategy rather than religious observance.⁷³) Much of the narrative is focalized by Jacky, who is one of Heke's supporters, and de Roo provides balance by narrating several chapters from the viewpoint of Tim Watson, a twelve-year-old drummer boy, and John Smith (Smithy), a middle-aged soldier, both members of the British regiment which has come to fight Heke and Kawiti. The battles are thus presented from the perspective of both attackers and defenders. At various points, the two narrative strands intersect: Jacky and his cousins rescue Tim when he is lost in the bush; Smithy helps Jacky when he is injured in a fight; Tim is held captive at Heke's pa and is adopted by Jacky's grandmother; Smithy befriends Jacky's mother Ripeka. When the war is over, the links forged between these people from different sides of the conflict give hope for the future. The book ends with Smithy the British soldier marrying Ripeka, cousin of his enemy, Hone Heke; and Jacky going to Bishop Selwyn's school in Auckland where he will be valued for both the Maori and Pakeha sides of his heritage.

This optimistic conclusion typifies de Roo's rather idealistic approach in these books; there are no villains, just well-meaning people on both sides, who do not really wish to fight each other, and who respect their opponents if they are given the chance to get to know them. Hone Heke, in particular, is presented as an admirable and charismatic figure, who inspires great loyalty, not only from his followers, even those like Jacky and Matiu who do not want to fight, but also from Pakeha like Noah and Tim. Heke is reluctant to fight the British, but is prepared to do so to protect his land

and people from the encroachment of the Pakeha. After Ruapekapeka and the death of many of his people, he realizes that he can no more hold back the Pakeha influx than he can prevent the waves from breaking on the beach. He tells Jacky that he is tired of fighting the waves, and that he has become a man of peace. However, he warns that although the waves cannot be stopped, Maori must retain their identity:

“We must be swimmers and learn to love the waves that will come and come and cover our land. But swimmers, always swimmers. A swimmer is himself, always himself. When a swimmer is not himself among the waves, but a part of the waves, that swimmer is dead.”⁷⁴

Beverley Dunlop's *Spirits of the Lake* (1988) returns to Te Kooti's Urewera campaigns which featured in a number of earlier books. This is not an historical novel as such, but a time-slip fantasy, in which the protagonist, twelve-year-old Paul, goes back in time to 1869 and becomes briefly involved in the lives of two young people – Paratene, a follower of Te Kooti, and Mereaira, a Tuhoe girl captured in a raid. Paul witnesses Te Kooti and his actions through their eyes, so he receives conflicting views – for Paratene, Te Kooti is a hero attacking the hated Government troops, but for Mereaira he is the monster who killed her family. Mereaira is a stronger character than Paratene, so her hatred has more weight than Paratene's admiration, and this negative impression is reinforced by the fact that Paul's first experience of the past is a raid on Mohaka where a number of people, including women and children, were brutally killed. The first parts of the historical strand of *Spirits of the Lake* have a factual basis (outlined in the 'Historical Note' at the end of the book), and Paul verifies some of the events he experiences in the past by reading about them in the present. It is worth noting that the history book Paul consults stresses the violence of Te Kooti's attack on Mohaka, describing it as a massacre, where people were taken out and slaughtered and children were 'killed by being thrown up into the air and caught on the points of the Hauhau bayonets'.⁷⁵ However, Dunlop then moves from history to fantasy by incorporating Te Kooti into another strand of the narrative – a rather convoluted pseudo-mythical plot involving a stone which holds the mauri (life-force) of an ancient pa. As part of this story, Te Kooti derives his power from the stone, and sacrifices the heart of a murdered trooper to the stone's spirits. Mereaira steals the stone in order to undermine Te Kooti's power, and he then disappears from the story.

The historical aspects of *Spirits of the Lake* are undermined by implicating the real character of Te Kooti in the fantasy plot. However, the book does offer a more balanced view of Te Kooti than the previous books on his campaigns (*In the Grip of the Hawk, Rifle and Tomahawk*, and *Gipsy Michael*) by giving a Maori perspective through Paratene and Mereaira, as well as a Pakeha view, albeit from a particular period and mindset, from the history book Paul consults. *Spirits of the Lake* focuses on a part of Te Kooti's career not mentioned in the other books, which deal only with the escape from the Chathams and the Poverty Bay raids. Dunlop also gives Maori characters a much greater role in her story. While in the earlier books the focus was firmly on the Pakeha characters, in *Spirits of the Lake* all the characters in the sections set in the past are Maori, and many of those in the present are as well. It is even suggested at the end that Paul is descended from Paratene and Mereaira, so he, too, is of Maori blood. The notion of Pakeha superiority so prevalent in the earlier books is absent, and the story of Te Kooti is not presented primarily in terms of a conflict between 'bad' Maori and 'good' Pakeha. *Spirits of the Lake* also gives a sense of the connection between past and present, as Paul is staying in the Ureweras where the historical events took place, and he is descended from people who participated in those events.

Blood of Tainui (1991) by Bernard Gadd (author of *Laya* and *Dare Not Fail*) is, as the title suggests, a novel about the Waikato War. Gadd has as his protagonists two young people – seventeen-year-old Victoria (Queenie) and her younger brother Daniel (Kingi) – who are the children of a Pakeha farmer, Edmund Wilkins, and his Maori wife, now dead. Edmund is determined that his family will not become involved on either side of the war, even when an emissary from Tainui comes and asks for their help. However, when the Waikato is invaded, the Wilkins are treated with suspicion because of their Maori blood, and both Queenie and Kingi decide to join with Tainui. Queenie, who is a good shot, becomes part of a taua (raiding party), while Kingi initially stays on the farm at Papatoetoe and passes on information about the government troops to Tainui, before going to join the fighters. Both are present at the defence of Rangiriri, where they are captured, and their friend Ehetere is killed. Edmund secures Queenie's release, but Kingi is held prisoner on Kawau Island until

he and his companions manage to escape ten months later. The reunited family leave Papatoetoe, where they are no longer welcome, to go and live in the Waikato.

Gadd has studied the Waikato War, and provides an accurate account of a number of the engagements of the early part of the campaign. The description of the battle of Rangiriri is based closely on that in Belich's *The New Zealand Wars*, and Gadd's debt to Belich is underlined by his use of a map of the Waikato campaigns from *The New Zealand Wars* as the frontispiece of his own book. Unlike most of the other historical novels about the Waikato War, *Blood of Tainui* does not feature the battle of Orakau; in fact, once the protagonists have been captured at Rangiriri, attention shifts to their plight and the war is not mentioned again, so readers are not told of the outcome of the conflict which is at the centre of the book. As in his other books, Gadd uses a rather disjointed narrative style, moving between different events and groups of characters, and not necessarily filling in the gaps. The dates at the head of each chapter are useful for keeping track of the chronology, though they also highlight an anomaly in the text. When Kingi meets his cousin Panirau at Paparata in November 1863 she is described as a child of twelve or thirteen, yet ten months later, in September 1864, she is fifteen, and old enough to have a romantic relationship with Kingi.

The author's sympathies are clear from his Foreword:

The problems and many injustices of the years which are covered by the time span of this story have yet to be fully recognized and resolved. This book is a tribute to everyone who has worked towards those goals. *Kia kaha! Kia manawanui!* [Be strong! Be brave!]⁷⁶

Queenie and Kingi are half Pakeha, but there is no real attempt to present a Pakeha view of the war, and they reject this side of their heritage and unequivocally support the Maori cause. Even their father Edmund helps the Tainui fighters by buying lead and food for them. Queenie spurns her Pakeha suitor in favour of Henare, who is also of mixed blood, and Kingi seems likely to marry his Maori cousin Pani. Queenie's Pakeha suitor, Alfred, is a foolish and ineffectual character, and other Pakeha are depicted in the main as land-grabbing and prejudiced; given to calling Maori 'Thieving savages'⁷⁷, 'blackies'⁷⁸, and 'Nigger sluts'.⁷⁹ The Forest Rangers are

‘animals’ who hunt down defenceless Maori⁸⁰; and Von Tempsky, who is a hero in other books, makes a brief appearance as a racist bully, who hits Kingi with his whip, steals his gun, and speaks broken English:

“Veder his fader’s a settler or not who carez, diz iz a darkie.” [...]

“Ve vaste enough time on diz vun, zuch a li’l boy he iz, too. Juz a fright iz all he needz, I tink. But no kuns for you kaffir boy. I keep diz.”⁸¹

However, the book ends with Henare expressing the hope ‘that Maori and *pakeha* may in the years ahead come to learn to give each other honour and peace and friendship’.⁸²

The contrast between this book and the first children’s historical novel about the New Zealand Wars, Henty’s *Maori and Settler*, demonstrates the way books on this topic changed during the one hundred years which elapsed between the publication of *Maori and Settler* in 1891 and *Blood of Tainui* in 1991. While Henty relied on English sources and was firmly on the side of the British, Gadd has based his book on Belich’s revisionist history of the wars, and is equally firmly on the side of the Maori. The most recent historical novel for young people featuring the New Zealand Wars offers a view which is between these two extreme positions. Hannah, the protagonist of Fleur Beale’s *A Respectable Girl* (2006) is the New Zealand-born daughter of English settlers, but her foster-mother Rawinia and foster-brother Arama are Maori. When hostilities threaten to break out in Taranaki in 1860, her loyalties are divided, as she can understand both the British and Maori attitudes towards the sale of the Waitara land. Hannah’s situation has parallels with that of Cedric in *The Greenstone Door*, and like Cedric, she is removed from the scene once the fighting starts so that she will not need to choose whom to support. Beale describes the gradual lead-up to the war, from the initial excitement of the settlers about the prospect of acquiring new land and their patriotic pride in the arrival of the British troops, to the increasing tension as families from outlying districts crowd into New Plymouth and the first shots are fired. Hannah’s step-father expresses the view of most of the New Plymouth townspeople: “‘This is our hour! We’ll show them what it means to defy England. One good encounter with the British army and they’ll be singing a different tune. William King will come begging for mercy, his tail between his legs.’”⁸³ Rawinia, on the other hand, supports Wiremu Kingi’s opposition to the land sale:

“Some Maori are happy. Some are not. It is the ones who are not who will be a mountain in the path of the Pakeha. [...] Hana my daughter, I am a rock in the mountain. To give up the land is to die.”⁸⁴ When fighting breaks out, Rawinia and Arama leave to join Kingi. Hannah’s twin brother Jamie, who has joined the militia, is unable to face the possibility of killing his foster-brother, so he and Hannah decide to leave New Zealand. The narrative then follows Hannah’s and Jamie’s experiences in England, and the war which had been such an important element of their lives is left behind, and is mentioned only briefly when Hannah receives the news that her best friend has died of typhus in the unsanitary conditions of besieged New Plymouth. It is frustrating for readers that the course of the war and its outcome, and the fate of Rawinia, Arama, and other characters who featured prominently in the first part of the book, are not followed up.

Nevertheless, Beale’s account of the prelude to the Taranaki war displays a greater knowledge and understanding of the Maori position than Bedford’s *Under One Standard*, published ninety years previously, reflecting the way perceptions of the New Zealand Wars have changed in the intervening years. Attitudes to war and conflict in works of fiction depend to some extent on the temporal distance from the war which forms the subject. Books written during or shortly after a conflict tend to have a didactic purpose, serving to ‘inculcate patriotic moral values’ and to ‘sustain the war effort, and promote a positive national image’.⁸⁵ Books written many years after the actual conflict, however, are less likely to be merely patriotic propaganda, and sometimes question the morality of war. Changing social attitudes also influence the way war stories are written. The *Cambridge Guide to Children’s Books in English* lists some ‘commonplace views’ relevant to what it terms ‘older stories’:

For example, that war books fascinate young readers because they provide real events that are more exciting than any make-believe yet appealingly predictable because the audience knows who won; that they evade serious moral issues or reduce them to the “good guys” versus the bad, thus serving as conduits for national ideologies; or that they are usually escapist (combat books for boys) or gendered (stories for girls on domestic contribution on the home front).⁸⁶

In *Old Lies Revisited: The Young Reader and the Literature of War and Violence*, Winifred Whitehead is critical of the many historical novels for young people which romanticise past battles and do not show the death and injury that result.⁸⁷ However,

Kate Agnew and Geoff Fox, the authors of *Children at War: From the First World War to the Gulf*, a 2001 study of English children's books with a wartime theme or setting, suggest that contemporary children's books are less likely to glorify war. Agnew and Fox note that during the last three decades of the twentieth century, "a sense of humanity" had largely displaced the certainties and jingoism [found] in the books of the nineteenth and early twentieth centuries'.⁸⁸ The authors' conclusions are based on their study of English historical fiction, but also have some relevance to New Zealand books about war:

The beliefs of each generation, and hence its fiction, are imbued with that generation's ideals. It is inevitable, perhaps, that novels written shortly after the war should depict the conflict through the eyes of heroic soldier figures, while the novels of our own time should question more closely the ethics of the war, presenting those who lived through it as ordinary human figures with whom the readers should empathize, rather than seek to emulate. At the end of the twentieth century, young readers and adults alike are encouraged to question the ethics of war, the demands made on young men sent to war, the role played by young women in wartime, and above all, perhaps, the place of the individual in society.⁸⁹

Historical fiction about the New Zealand Wars is imbued with the ideals of the generation which produced it, and the earlier books tend to share the 'certainties and jingoism' of the other war books of their era. In the words of the *Cambridge Guide*, in their treatment of war 'they evade serious moral issues or reduce them to the 'good guys' versus the bad, thus serving as conduits for national ideologies.'⁹⁰ The earliest New Zealand children's historical novel, *Distant Homes*, began this process by presenting the war in Taranaki as an insurrection by bad and rebellious Maori against the benevolent settlers. When an emissary from Wiremu Kingi comes to the local pa asking for support, some 'idle and evil-disposed natives'⁹¹ listen to him, but Captain Graham is able to dissuade them from joining the rebellion by:

describing all they were learning from the English, and that the country was called the England of the south, and thought one of the best countries in the world, besides being large enough to hold both the original natives and their English brothers, who wished to teach them to live as comfortably as themselves.⁹²

In Kingston's novels, the English settlers are likewise able to avert rebellion by pointing out to Maori the benefits of British rule (and the might of the British army). These texts justify the war; firstly, by stressing the material and spiritual benefits which Maori have gained by embracing Western civilisation and Christianity;

secondly, by picturing the settlers as benevolent and acting in the best interests of the Maori; and, thirdly, by demonizing those Maori who oppose the settlers as ‘savages’, who not only reject God and the Queen, but are the perpetrators of ‘fearful atrocities’.⁹³

These books therefore, like those of Henty and Horsley, are conduits of the imperial ideology of the time they were written. The protagonists of Aylmer’s and Kingston’s evangelizing texts do not take part in the conflict (although Captain Graham and Major Parry are former military men, and Tom Graham joins the navy). However, in both *Maori and Settler* and *In the Grip of the Hawk* the main characters play an active role in fighting the Maori foe, conforming to the model postulated by Agnew and Fox that ‘novels written shortly after the war [...] depict the conflict through the eyes of heroic soldier figures’.⁹⁴ According to Jeffrey Richards, war dominates in Henty’s narratives, a natural result of ‘the whole martial ethos of the age’, in which ‘war was seen as a moral force and the profession of soldiering a noble one’.⁹⁵ The ‘small wars’ waged by Britain in various parts of the Empire were regarded as good training grounds for officers and a means of building character. ‘War is seen not as a matter of terror and mass destruction but as an arena for excitement and adventure, and a vehicle for the noblest of instincts – courage and comradeship, service and sacrifice.’⁹⁶ This is certainly the case in *Maori and Settler*, where Wilfred’s and Mr Atherton’s participation in the Poverty Bay campaign is couched in terms of an exciting adventure; particularly the episode in which Mr Atherton proves his ‘courage and comradeship’ (and almost superhuman strength) by literally carrying two wounded men and a child to safety after a Hauhau attack. As in other books of this time, the settlers are depicted as admirable characters, who take up arms only when they are unjustly attacked by the Maori. ““These natives have no cause of complaint whatever against us. [...] Their intention is to slay man, woman and child without mercy, and I therefore regard them as human tigers and no more deserving of pity.””⁹⁷ The illustrations show the Maori as tattooed savages ferociously attacking the white settlers.



MARION COVERS THE NATIVE WITH HER RIFLE.



MR. ATHERTON KEEPS THE MOUTH OF THE DEFILE.

Illustrations by Alfred Pearse for *Maori and Settler* by G. A. Henty, p.227, and frontispiece.

This view of Maori savagery is taken to extremes in *In the Grip of the Hawk*, which revolves around the contrast between the two main characters, noble Englishman George and savage Maori chief, Te Karearea. Horsley uses emotive language to hammer home his point, as in a description of Te Karearea's Hauhau followers as hysterical and feminised savages dancing around a pole surmounted by the head of a British soldier. Horsley refers to their 'mad orgies', likens the dancers to 'an array of petticoated skeletons, gouted with blood, dancing round the wild fires of a witches' sabbath', and describes them as 'half-mad with religious ecstasy and wholly consumed with hatred of the detested Pakeha'. Te Karearea himself 'screamed and gabbled the most appalling mixture of frenzied prayer and blasphemous incantation' before 'falling headlong, writhed in a convulsion'.⁹⁸ George, by comparison, remains self-possessed, and is driven to action only by the discovery of Te Karearea's attack on the defenceless settler families. Horsley, like Henty, emphasizes the 'adventure' aspect of the conflict and minimizes the 'terror and mass destruction'.⁹⁹ Terence, at any rate, regards it as fun: during the fighting between the Arawa and Te Karearea's followers, he is described as 'screeching with excitement'¹⁰⁰ and being 'almost mad

with the fierce joy of his first battle'.¹⁰¹ The author sees the death of Te Karearea and the destruction of his pa as a fitting conclusion to the story; he has no interest in the aftermath of the conflict, and the book ends with George and Terence planning their return to Australia.

Horsley was inspired in part by his recollections of watching regiments of soldiers marching through Sydney on their way to fight in New Zealand during the 1860s. His memories of the 'scenes which filled my childhood with so much colour and interest and delight' no doubt contribute to his excessively imperialistic stance.¹⁰² New Zealand ceased to be a colony and became a Dominion in 1907, the year *In the Grip of the Hawk* was published, and it is possible that the patriotic feeling this engendered was another factor. At this time there was still enormous pressure on Maori to part with their remaining lands; and books such as this, by portraying the Maori as 'savage', played a role in the process of dispossessing Maori of their autonomy and identity, and helping to legitimize the British presence in New Zealand.

The *Greenstone Door* and *Under One Standard*, published a few years after *In the Grip of the Hawk*, attempt to give a more balanced view of the wars by using the device popularized by Scott of having a protagonist who occupies a fairly neutral position between the opposing sides. Satchell, unlike the authors of the previous books about the New Zealand Wars, actually lived in New Zealand. He was married to a Maori woman, and consequently had a greater understanding of, and sympathy for, the Maori cause than earlier (and many subsequent) writers. *The Greenstone Door* does not represent a complete departure from previous texts; for example, Te Karearea is matched in evil by such characters as the sinister tohunga, Te Atua Mangu, and the paramount chief Te Huata, 'a savage of the old school: fierce and bloodthirsty, a cannibal by choice as well as by custom, and a hater of the pakeha'.¹⁰³ There are also, as Jane Stafford and Mark Williams observe, several 'lurid, thrillingly horrified and highly detailed representations of cannibalism, in both cases associated with the prurient description of the death of a young woman'.¹⁰⁴ Nevertheless, Satchell's view of Maori society as a whole is sympathetic, and his hero, Cedric, identifies himself more with the Maori people among whom he grew up than with the

Pakeha society of Auckland. The most attractive characters in the book are either Maori – Rangiora and Puhi-Huia – or pro-Maori – Purcell and Governor Grey; while the Pakeha settlers (and later, soldiers) are represented by the repellent Brompart family. The war is seen not as a treacherous rebellion on the part of the Maori, but as an understandable and necessary reaction to the loss of their lands: “‘How absurd, nay, how wicked, to talk of the rebellion of those from whom we have taken the earth! It is the clear duty of all living creatures to rebel against extinction; on that depends the advancement, even the continuance of life.’”¹⁰⁵ *The Greenstone Door* depicts the conflict as inevitable, despite efforts on both sides to avert it; Governor Grey describes it as disease which cannot be eradicated and must run its course.¹⁰⁶

Stafford and Williams have noted that the Maori world in *The Greenstone Door* is associated with ‘a mythic timelessness’, and that, ‘when the Maori world is brought into a collision with modernity in what Satchell calls “the Maori war”, the lovers and their world are obliterated, to be absorbed into the memory and the memorializing imagination of Cedric, and of Satchell’.¹⁰⁷ Henty’s and Horsley’s narratives of dispossession are predicated on Maori savagery, while Satchell’s is based on the assumption that the destruction of the Maori world, while highly regrettable, is unavoidable, and that the Maori race is doomed to ‘extinction in the blood of the conqueror’.¹⁰⁸ Despite Satchell’s sympathy for the Maori and nostalgia for the vanished ‘halcyon days’ before the wars, and despite the fact that his protagonist does not take an active part in the fighting, his book has the same conclusion as those of the overtly imperialistic writers – the Maori are defeated, and the hero, a noble young Englishman, is left as the symbolic victor.

Bedford’s *Under One Standard*, like *The Greenstone Door*, avoids the simplistic ‘good versus bad’ scenario, and attempts to give a balanced view of the causes of the Taranaki War. This may be in deference to the fact that in 1916, when the book was published, Maori and Pakeha soldiers were fighting on the same side on the battlefields of World War I. The author was undoubtedly influenced by the attitude towards the war expressed by Lady Martin in *Our Maoris*, the book which provided a great deal of Bedford’s source material. It is clear that Lady Martin had a genuine fondness for the Maori people and was distressed by the outbreak of hostilities

between the races; and her husband, Judge Martin, and their friend, Bishop Selwyn, made themselves unpopular by opposing the war. Bishop Selwyn's attempts at peacemaking feature prominently in *Under One Standard*, and the other main characters, David and Folkes, are also more interested in converting Maori than in fighting them. Bedford does not describe any battles, but rather the negative effect of the war on ordinary people.

Under One Standard has an underlying message of Christian pacifism, while *The Greenstone Door* depicts war as inevitable but deplores the cost of the conflict on both personal and national terms; and both are focalized by non-combatant protagonists. *Rifle and Tomahawk*, published in the 1920s, does not continue the questioning of the morality of war found in these texts, but instead returns to presenting the conflict as an exciting adventure told from the viewpoint of a heroic soldier figure, in this case, fourteen-year old Ron. He sees the war as a game: "It will be rather a lark, going into Te Kooti's pa in disguise."¹⁰⁹ "I wonder how many boys in this country fifty years hence will be able to say that they've fought Maoris? [...] I'm jolly glad I'm alive now, because I'd be missing a lot of fun."¹¹⁰ Ron's belief in the justice of his cause, and apparent indifference to the death and injury caused by the fighting, means that his enjoyment remains unimpaired:

"Well, what did you think of your first fight?"

"It was jolly good, sir," answered Ron shyly. "But there wasn't enough of it."¹¹¹

Even the difficulties of pursuing Te Kooti through the Ureweras does not bring Ron back to reality:

But though they were often suffering great hardship, even though they had to go hungry, and were compelled to undergo privation, Ron gloried in the life. Over the camp-fires they built at night, whenever they dared, there hung a spirit of romance and of adventure.¹¹²

The war is seen as extremely beneficial in personal terms; not only does Ron become the youngest person ever to win the New Zealand War Cross, but his experiences have set him up for life:

Ronald Cameron came back from his campaigning a man in everything but years. The keen air of the mountain-passes had filled him out. He was bronzed, strong as

a young lion, and wore an air of quiet self-reliance that promised him a splendid manhood.¹¹³

A ‘spirit of romance and of adventure’ hangs over not just the soldiers’ campfires, but over the entire narrative of *Rifle and Tomahawk*. The Forest Rangers are a ‘splendid’ and ‘gallant set of men’,¹¹⁴ and the settlers are ‘courageous pioneers’¹¹⁵ whose right to ‘carve a home out of the wilderness’¹¹⁶ is unquestioned. Te Kooti, the ‘arch-villain’,¹¹⁷ is never actually seen, and remains a shadowy and menacing figure in the background. Tracy’s attitude to the war is summed up in the subtitle of *Rifle and Tomahawk* – ‘A Stirring Tale of the Te Kooti Rebellion’. (The subtitle was omitted from the Kotare Books edition of 1983, possibly in deference to modern sensibilities.)

Nearly thirty years elapsed before the publication of another children’s book about the New Zealand wars, corresponding to a general lack of historical writing on this topic during this time. According to James Belich:

Wider neglect stemmed partly from the notion, which grew from the 1880s, that history was something that happened overseas, and partly from the centrality of the legend of good race relations in New Zealand ideology. New Zealandness consisted significantly in the belief that Pakeha had the best blacks and treated them best – a key way of telling the difference between New Zealanders and Australians. Forgetting or downplaying the wars was important here, as was massaging them into the least disagreeable shape possible: a good clean fight, dotted with incidents of courage and chivalry, after which the two peoples shook hands and made up.¹¹⁸

Belich dates the rise in interest in the New Zealand Wars to the 1980s (presumably coinciding with the publication of his revisionist history), but in fact Ronald Syme’s *Gipsy Michael* was published in 1954, and the 1960s saw the publication of six historical novels for children about the wars. Bill Pearson’s comments on historical fiction in his essay on ‘The Maori and Literature 1938-65’ apply to these books:

The impulse of most of the novels is a retrospective endorsement of the European occupation and (by implication) of an ideology of tutelage in race relations. There are usually four sets of participants, the good Pakeha and the good Maori, the bad Pakeha and the bad Maori. Co-operation between the first two is seen as having been sadly interrupted by the land wars in which the good Maori and the good Pakeha fought each other in a spirit of mutual respect.¹¹⁹

Gipsy Michael, *Muskets and Trouble*, *Fire in the Bracken*, *Children of the Forest*, (and also *The Forest Rangers* published in the late 1970s) all follow Pearson’s model,

although there are variations in assigning the roles of ‘good’ and ‘bad’ Pakeha and Maori. Syme, for example, casts Michael and his English shipmates and the British militia as good, because they are reluctant to fight the Maori, and depicts the settlers as bad. “‘The wealthy men out here are keen to grab as much land as possible and they don’t mind how they get it. If they can take it away from the Maoris without payment, so much the better.’”¹²⁰ There are some bad Maori, such as the ‘throng of savages’¹²¹ who attack and burn the ship with no apparent cause, and the Hauhau, who are detested by Maori and Pakeha alike. Most of the Maori, however, are ‘a decent race of natives’¹²² and ‘fine and chivalrous warriors’,¹²³ and their bravery at Orakau moves the soldiers to tears. The attitude is somewhat patronizing; the missionary Mr Volckner describes Maori as ‘simple and primitive’, and says of the sale of arms to Maori, ‘one might as well give such dangerous weapons to children’.¹²⁴ The book ends with a prophetic speech by the young Maori girl, Miro, who, in an echo of *The Greenstone Door*, describes her people as ‘a doomed race’,¹²⁵ and predicts that:

“You *pakeha* will always scorn our traditions and songs and language. You will lure our young men to toil on farms and in workshops. Soon the real Maori people will vanish because they no longer have anything for which to live. Our descendants will call themselves Maoris but they will have little in common with us except the name and a few ancient memories.”¹²⁶

Gipsy Michael was written at the time of the major post-war migration of Maori from rural areas to the cities, and this may be a factor in the author’s nostalgia for the disappearance of the traditional Maori way of life.

In *Muskets and Trouble*, *Fire in the Bracken*, and *The Forest Rangers* the good Pakeha are the settlers, who take up arms only to defend themselves and their families; while the British soldiers, who were the heroes in *Gipsy Michael* and in *Children of the Forest*, are depicted in *The Forest Rangers* as incompetent blunderers. The bad Pakeha in *Muskets and Trouble* are the musket traders, while in *Fire in the Bracken*, bad Pakeha are personified by the convict Despard who incites the Maori to attack the settlers. In all of these books, the bad Maori are those who oppose the Pakeha, and the good Maori are those who support them. The Pakeha protagonists often use the language skills and bushcraft they have learnt from their

‘good’ Maori friends to aid them in the fight against the ‘bad’ Maori. The attitude to Maori and to the wars in these novels is summed up by the leader of the settlers in *Fire in the Bracken*: ““They’re not all bad,” Barker commented, “any more than we ain’t all good. [...] Mind you, the good ’uns are just as dangerous on the warpath, but when they’re beaten we’ll be friends again.””¹²⁷ War in these books offers the opportunity for their protagonists to have exciting adventures, secure in the knowledge that they are in the right and that they will be the victors. There is no examination of the ethics of warfare, or the effects of the war on those on the losing side; and the books share not only a retrospective endorsement of the European occupation, but the glib assumption that the vanquished Maori will readily accept their losses and ‘be friends again’. In these books, as in the non-fiction histories of the time described by Belich, the wars are ‘massag[ed] into the least disagreeable shape possible: a good clean fight, dotted with incidents of courage and chivalry, after which the two peoples shook hands and made up’.¹²⁸ They reflect what Erik Olssen identifies as ‘official and popular views’ of the New Zealand Wars current in the late 1950s, when interpretations of the conflict were coloured by ‘the idea that New Zealand had become a harmonious bi-racial society’.¹²⁹

Pearson speaks of ‘the need for a myth more satisfactory to the modern Pakeha conscience’ and states that, ‘Only Roderick Finlayson’s *The Springing Fern* (1965) admits a Pakeha betrayal of promises: it presents Maori history in terms of responses to a series of challenges, and the myth is more satisfying than that of the adult novels.’¹³⁰ *The Springing Fern* challenges the prevailing myth, firstly by employing a Maori focalizer, so that the narrative of the war is one of defeat rather than victory; and secondly by continuing the story to the time of writing (1965) to show the long-term as well as immediate effects of the conflict and the subsequent land confiscations. For Hira and his people, the war is not an exciting adventure, but a tragic event with serious and continuing repercussions. They are forced by soldiers to leave their village; their homes are burnt, and the church and school they had laboured to build are used by the troops as barracks and stables. (The historical episode on which this is based is recounted in *Our Maoris*.¹³¹) The tribe regard themselves as friendly to the Pakeha and loyal to the Queen, so they feel betrayed when their lands are confiscated. Unlike the protagonists of the earlier texts, who

survive the wars unscathed, Hira is killed in the fighting. The protagonists of those books returned to normal life after the fighting, but Hira's people cannot go back to their old lives, and his death has deprived them of their future leader. Their bitterness at the way they have been treated, and the disparity between their pre- and post-war existence and between their lives and those of their Pakeha neighbours, calls into question the concept of racial harmony which underlies the optimistic endings of previous books.

It is notable that Finlayson's sympathetic rendering of the Maori experience of the New Zealand wars pre-dates by ten years the establishment of the Waitangi Tribunal and the interest in Maori issues this engendered. Locke's *The End of the Harbour* and Bacon's *Again, the Bugles Blow*, published in 1968 and 1973 respectively, were also written before the massive social change around Maori issues and Treaty rights of the late 1970s and 1980s. Together with Locke's 1983 *Journey Under Warning* and de Roo's *Jacky Nobody* and *The Bats' Nest*, also published in the 1980s, these books attempt to give a view of the wars which give due weight to Maori as well as Pakeha viewpoints. All of them have as protagonists neutral figures who are able to see both sides of the conflict. They conform to the pattern identified by Agnew and Fox, who argue that novels written during the last three decades of the twentieth century question more closely the ethics of war, and present those who lived through it as ordinary human figures with whom the readers should empathize. An exception to this trend is *The Forest Rangers*, which, although published in the 1979, harks back to the simplistic 'good versus bad' scenario of the 1950s and 1960s.

The Waikato campaign, as depicted in *Again, the Bugles Blow*, is a tragic conflict in which there is right on both sides – the brave Maori are fighting for their land, and the fundamentally decent soldiers are protecting the lives and property of the settlers. As the campaign progresses, the soldiers' enthusiasm for fighting declines: 'but now the soldiers seemed to go into each battle with less and less eagerness. It was almost as if they were sorry for the Maoris who were being driven from their tribal lands.'¹³² The protagonist, Rua, is a fairly passive figure, who listens and observes but takes no part in the conflict until he decides to enter the pa at Orakau; though even then he is not taking sides, but merely trying to find his ancestor. Using a time-slip narrative with

Rua as the focalizer enables Bacon to present the war from a twentieth century perspective, as a wasteful and unnecessary event:

If he could get a chance to talk to someone important, perhaps he could tell them that the fighting was a waste, and time and lives could be saved if the Maoris and the pakehas could stop fighting and start working together to build the New Zealand that Rua knew was going to be.¹³³

At Orakau, Rua wants to tell the Maori defenders to stop fighting, because ‘the New Zealand of a hundred years on would be a country of brown Maori and white pakeha living as one people’.¹³⁴ However, although the point is not laboured, Bacon indicates that the war has had long term effects – Maori and Pakeha may be living as one people but not on terms of equality. Rua’s twentieth century Maori family no longer own any land; rather they live in a decrepit old house in Grey Lynn, on a gully filled with rubbish, and pay rent to the Pakeha owner.

Locke and de Roo both depict the conflict between Maori and Pakeha as a tragedy caused by misunderstanding, rather than animosity, between the races. Their books focus on friendship between individuals of both sides, at a personal level which transcends enmity and looks forward to a shared future once the fighting is over. Locke’s pacifism is well-known, and it is not surprising that *The End of the Harbour* does not feature actual warfare, but rather the attempts of well-meaning people, both Maori and Pakeha, to prevent the conflict in Taranaki from spreading. By stressing the peacemaking attempts of King Potatau and other Maori leaders; the goodwill towards Maori of many of the settlers, including Dr Topp and Captain Champion, who are held up as role-models; and the close friendship between Pakeha David and Maori Honatana, Locke presents an idealistic picture of Maori/Pakeha relations, which minimizes the real antagonism that existed. Although at the end of the story it is clear that war is coming, the concluding paragraphs repeat Potatau’s reference to the different races as coloured threads which are intertwined, and imply that it is this friendship between the races, rather than the temporary hostilities, which will endure.

Journey Under Warning also features friendship between Pakeha and Maori characters, and suggests that the confrontation which resulted in nearly thirty deaths could have been avoided if the surveyors and their employers, the New Zealand

Company, had been less hasty and more understanding. Locke is at pains to give a Maori as well as Pakeha perspective of events, and balances the description of the killing of Captain Wakefield and his companions by Te Rauparaha's party with several episodes in which the survivors are welcomed and kindly treated by other groups of Maori. She also shows the costs of conflict in the death of several of the main characters, including, with sad irony, the Quaker Mr Cotterell, who was unarmed and had attempted to prevent the carrying of weapons.

De Roo's books on the Northern War also present both Maori and Pakeha perspectives, mainly through the vacillating loyalties of the protagonist, Jacky; and though they are less didactic in tone than Locke's, they share her anti-war sentiments. Many of the main characters are pacifist and fight only because they are forced to do so by circumstance. Hone Heke, for example, cuts down the flag pole as a matter of principle but does not want to fight people, and only does so reluctantly when his pa is attacked. Jacky fights only to support his cousin Heke; while his other cousin, Matiu, preaches against fighting and joins in the battle round the flagstaff simply to protect Jacky and Noah. The Englishman, Smithy, is press-ganged into the army and is a reluctant soldier; and even the drummer-boy, Tim, who is proud of his army background, loses the will to fight when he comes to know his Maori captors. Noah Miggs, who thinks that war will mean 'fun and frolics', is faced with reality when he sees fighting at first hand; and when Matiu is killed trying to protect him, Noah is happy to leave the war behind and escape to Auckland. Other pro-war characters, such as Jacky's young cousin Hiwa, and the heroic Toby Philpotts, are killed in the fighting.

War in *Jacky Nobody* and *The Bats' Nest* is far from being 'fun and frolics', and many of the characters pay a physical and mental price. Some lose their lives; others, such as Smithy and Heke, are badly wounded; while others, including Jacky, have difficulty in coming to terms with what they are doing. Unlike Ron in *Rifle and Tomahawk*, who thinks war is a game and calmly knifes a Hauhau warrior, Jacky is deeply upset when he kills a soldier in battle, and later saves the life of a British soldier to redeem himself. Despite the cost of the fighting, there is an optimistic ending, in which the friendship between individuals proves to be stronger than the

issues which had divided them. Heke's words to Jacky, "A war party meeting a war party makes enemies, but a man meeting a man makes friends",¹³⁵ summarise the theme of these books. Heke realises that he cannot hold back the waves of Pakeha settlers, and that the fighting has been in vain; but the ending suggests that in future Maori and Pakeha will be united, as epitomised by the marriage of Smithy and Ripeka, and in the person of Jacky himself. 'Reflecting de Roo's liberal 1970s view, the hero, mixed-race orphan Jacky, must acknowledge both sides of his heritage to become a strong adult – as must New Zealand, in de Roo's eyes.'¹³⁶

Blood of Tainui has similarities to de Roo's books, in that the children of a Pakeha father and a Maori mother are drawn into the war and choose to fight on the Maori side. The Welsh deserter, Richard Morgan, resembles Smithy in his reluctance to fight; and the ending has a similar multi-racial family grouping making a new life away from the fighting. Unlike de Roo, however, Gadd does not attempt to give a balanced view of the conflict. Queenie and Kingi do not have the same crisis of conscience as Jacky does; they have no thought of supporting the British settlers or of remaining neutral, but are unhesitatingly on the side of Tainui. The Pakeha characters are unpleasantly racist; with the exception of Queenie and Kingi's father, Edward, who supports Tainui, and Morgan, who sympathises with the Maori:

"'Tis not a whit different, do you see, what these English are doin' to these poor Maori from what they did to us in Wales: wantin' to take everythin' from us that makes us ourselves, that gives us our mite of pride, that preserves for us a little plot of land to walk on without bein' either trespasser nor rent-payer."¹³⁷

Gadd depicts war as a tragedy with grave consequences for those involved. Although Kingi and Queenie both survive, Kingi is imprisoned for ten months, and Queenie, after months of fighting, is 'nothing but a cage of bone covered in red-blotched skin'.¹³⁸ Their friend Ehetere is killed at Rangiriri, and others are wounded. Edward loses his farm, and the family have to leave their home. While de Roo depicts Jacky's mixed race as an advantage, in that it allows him to understand both the Maori and Pakeha viewpoints, and he is welcomed by both sides, Gadd's mixed-race characters must choose which side to support, and are then rejected by the other. By aligning themselves with the Tainui cause, they put themselves on the losing side, and as in *The Springing Fern*, the other historical novel told mainly from a Maori

perspective, the ending is not as positive as in the other books about the wars. The family may be starting a new life in the Waikato, but the war continues, and ‘the problems and the many injustices’ of that time have, according to Gadd, ‘yet to be fully recognized and resolved’.¹³⁹

The two other books in which the New Zealand Wars feature, Dunlop’s *Spirits of the Lake* and Beale’s *A Respectable Girl*, also focus on the negative impact of war. Dunlop stresses the violence and terror of Te Kooti’s attacks and the plight of captives such as Mereaira. Beale does not describe any actual fighting, but rather the unfortunate consequences of the conflict – the destruction of young settlers’ homes and hopes, the death of innocent victims in overcrowded New Plymouth, and the division of families, like Hannah’s, which have both Maori and English members. The tone of the book is anti-war; Hannah and her brother leave for England so that Jamie will not have to fight, and Captain Lindhurst leaves the army because, “‘It is a bad war we are waging. I want no part of it.’”¹⁴⁰

Such sentiments would never have been uttered by the patriotic British soldiers who featured in the jingoistic tales of the late nineteenth and early twentieth century, demonstrating how much the depiction of war and conflict has changed since that time. Henty, Horsley and Tracy were resolutely pro-British, and presented the New Zealand Wars as the inevitable triumph of white soldiers over savage natives; and, while Satchell and Bedford were both sympathetic to the Maori cause, they did not ultimately question the concept of Pakeha superiority. During the 1950s and 1960s, the wars were seen as an exciting adventure which gave youngsters the chance to indulge in daring exploits, often with the aid of a Maori friend. In the books of this time, the ‘good’ Pakeha always defeated the ‘bad’ Maori, after which good race relations were resumed. Finlayson provided the only exception to this model. Historical novels published since the 1970s generally try to present a more balanced view by giving equal weight to Maori and Pakeha perspectives, and are more likely to consider the cost of war and the morality of conflict. In this, they resemble the late twentieth century English war novels described by Agnew and Fox, which question the ethics of war, and investigate ‘the demands made on young men sent to war [and] the role played by young women in wartime’.¹⁴¹

The role played by young women in wartime is another area which has changed over time. Books about war are overwhelmingly about boys or young men; there are few female roles, and even fewer female protagonists. J. S. Bratton's study of early nineteenth century girl's fiction shows that the heroism, patriotic aggression and masculinity of imperial adventure stories for boys ran counter to the values of the Victorian and Edwardian ideal of womanhood, and that girls were assigned a more passive role:

The middle-class girl, in particular, had to learn to be wife and mother to the pioneer and soldier, and therefore the depository of the 'home values' and guarantor of 'higher' feelings and motives for the men's conquests. The ladies at home were both the motive for fighting and striving, in themselves – in their need for protection, and their ability to offer rewards to the victor – and the guardians and transmitters of more abstract justification, of ideals, a sense of purpose and rectitude. They were both the warriors' prize and the embodied ideal.¹⁴²

This is certainly the case in *Maori and Settler*, where Marion rejects an active role in the fighting and marries heroic Mr Atherton. Horsley has no role for girls in *In the Grip of the Hawk*; the only female is a pretty Maori maiden who ministers to George's wants when he is injured, and George is rewarded with a male, rather than a female, partner, when his father buys a station for him and his friend Terence. (The concept of a young woman as the warriors' prize resurfaces in *Muskets and Trouble*, where Robert's brave exploits gain him a bride, and in *A Respectable Girl*, where the dashing Captain Lindhurst wins the hand, firstly of Hannah's friend Judith, and after her death, of Hannah herself.)

Some of the later books have female characters, but they are almost invariably seen in caring roles. Helenora looks after Cedric during his period of insanity in *The Greenstone Door*. In *Rifle and Tomahawk*, Isbel carries her baby brother to safety, and her request to join Ron in fighting Te Kooti is greeted with indulgent laughter. The McGlone girls in *Journey Under Warning* take care of Will Morrison's little son, and in *The Bats' Nest* Jacky's mother Ripeka nurses wounded soldiers. The idea that women's true sphere is in caring for their menfolk is most clearly expressed in *Gipsy Michael*, and reflects the attitudes of the 1950s when the book was written. The young Maori girl, Miro, after taking part in the battle of Orakau, rescues Michael and

his two friends from their Hauhau captors and leads them to safety. In gratitude, Captain Christian offers her a home on his ship.

“It appears to me,” went on the Captain, “you’d be mighty useful aboard. There’s been no woman to look after Dick and me since his mother died fourteen years ago. There’s clothes to mend and ironing to be done, and maybe you could give our ship’s cook a hint or two. Lord knows he needs it badly enough.”¹⁴³

Miro’s response is to dive over the side of the ship and swim to shore to rejoin her tribe. The captain’s puzzlement at her rejection of his generous offer is not likely to be shared by modern readers.

Miro’s active role – fighting at Orakau and rescuing captives – highlights a fundamental difference in the way Maori and Pakeha females are presented in these historical novels. While Pakeha women did not fight even when offered a chance (as in *Maori and Settler*), a number of novels have Maori women actively involved in the conflict. In *The Greenstone Door*, Puhi-Huia takes part in the battle at Orakau and is killed, and in *Blood of Tainui*, Queenie, Ehetere, and even young Pani, join in the fighting at Rangiriri. Prior to that, Queenie is part of a taua (war party) on equal terms with the male warriors, and is renowned for her marksmanship. The contrast between the essentially passive Pakeha women, who were generally sent to safety while their menfolk fought, and the aggressive Maori women who were prepared to fight and kill, could possibly be read as marking the Maori as savage and ‘other’, and therefore providing another justification for the conflict (though it is unlikely that Gadd would intend to imply this).

On the whole, historical novels for children about the New Zealand Wars attempt to present an accurate version of events, based on the most reliable historical sources available at the time. Many authors have undertaken extensive research (sometimes referenced in Forewords or Historical Notes), and have adhered as closely as possible to the historical record. This is, of course, no guarantee of authenticity; as Belich points out, until the latter part of the twentieth century the dominant interpretation (or master narrative) of the New Zealand Wars was based on the British expectation of victory, and evidence was manipulated to exaggerate British victories and downplay or ignore their defeats. ‘Victory came in history books, won by the pen where the

sword had failed.’¹⁴⁴ Novels based on these history books tend to share their pro-British sentiments, their belief in the superiority of the British forces, and also their attitude to Maori, which emphasized either Maori courage and chivalry, or Maori barbarism.¹⁴⁵ This is borne out by the majority of historical novels about the wars, which have Pakeha focalizers, and divide the Maori characters into ‘good’ – those who are courageous, chivalrous and generally pro-British, and ‘bad’ – those who are savage and anti-British. However, as previously noted, a number of authors of historical fiction for children, notably Finlayson, Bacon, Locke and de Roo, prefigured Belich’s revisionist history of the wars by attempting to present a more balanced view of the conflict, and a less simplistic representation of the Maori experience and achievements, often through the use of a Maori focalizer.

In some cases, new historical interpretations of certain aspects of the wars mean that information on which earlier novels were based has been superseded; for example, the various books about Te Kooti and his campaigns were written before Belich’s and Binney’s books were published, so their views are now outdated, as is Messenger’s interpretation of Parihaka. Their authors were reflecting the historical opinion of the time and not attempting to mislead their readers, but a few novels about the wars deliberately modify or distort the historical record. In the case of *Gipsy Michael* and *Muskets and Trouble* this has apparently been done for the sake of writing an exciting story, but Horsley’s rewriting of Te Kooti’s history in *In the Grip of the Hawk* has a more serious purpose, serving as imperial propaganda. Since in reality Te Kooti was never captured, the defeat and death of his fictional counterpart is a clear example of a victory won by the pen. The impression given in *The Forest Rangers* that there were no land confiscations after the Waikato campaign and that Maori and Pakeha immediately settled down harmoniously together seriously misrepresents the actual situation and dismisses the real cost to the Tainui people. Given the critical role of the New Zealand Wars in this country’s history, such conscious distortion of the historical evidence for fictional purposes is ahistorical and undesirable.

While the New Zealand Wars were immensely important for those directly involved, they had less impact on people living outside the areas of conflict. The South Island was largely unaffected, as Elwell noted in *The Boy Colonists*:

During the whole time Ernest was in New Zealand the war was conducted in a very desultory manner, and was looked on by many in Otago as a perfect farce and an unnecessary burden to all the provinces; for all had to be taxed to pay the soldier, while none but the provinces immediately concerned were likely to receive any benefit. Otago being the largest and most populous, though most remote, of the provinces, had to bear a large share of the charge. The accounts in the newspapers were so ridiculous that they were scarcely credible. [...] Many in Otago hardly believed there was a war, or that the accounts could be correct, they seemed to be so extremely absurd.¹⁴⁶

For the residents of Otago, the discovery of gold was more significant than the war being waged in the North Island; historical novels dealing with the gold rushes thus form the topic of the next chapter.

¹ Syme, *Gipsy Michael*, p.118.

² James Belich, *The New Zealand Wars and the Victorian Interpretation of Racial Conflict* (Auckland: Penguin, 1988), p.15.

³ Gibbons, 'Non-Fiction', p.46.

⁴ Gibbons, 'Non-Fiction', p.46.

⁵ Reginald Horsley, *The Romance of Empire: New Zealand* (London: Caxton, 1908), p.287.

⁶ Belich, *The New Zealand Wars*, p.16.

⁷ Gibbons, 'Non-Fiction', p.72.

⁸ Belich, *The New Zealand Wars*, p.15.

⁹ Belich, *The New Zealand Wars*, p.16.

¹⁰ 'David Gunby has traced the historical detail of *Maori and Settler* to Thomas Gudgeon's *Reminiscences of the War in New Zealand*.' Ringer, p.19.

¹¹ Henty, p.vi.

¹² Henty, p.281.

¹³ Henty, p.162.

¹⁴ Henty, p.332.

¹⁵ Reginald Horsley, *In the Grip of the Hawk*, illus. by W. Herbert Holloway (London: T. C. & E. C. Jack, 1907), p.vi.

¹⁶ Horsley, *New Zealand*, p.285 and p.287.

¹⁷ Horsley, *In the Grip of the Hawk*, p.31.

¹⁸ Horsley, *In the Grip of the Hawk*, p.66.

¹⁹ Horsley, *In the Grip of the Hawk*, p.190.

²⁰ William Satchell, *The Greenstone Door* (London: Sidgwick & Jackson, 1914) [Viking: Auckland, 1987], p.42.

²¹ Satchell, p.242.

²² Satchell, p.278.

²³ Satchell, p.278.

²⁴ Satchell, p.279.

²⁵ Louise Katherine O'Brien, 'Hybridity and Indigeneity: Historical Narratives and Post-Colonial Identity'. M.A. thesis, Victoria University of Wellington, 1996, cited in Jane Stafford and Mark Williams, *Maoriland: New Zealand Literature 1872-1914* (Wellington, Victoria University Press, 2006), p.247.

²⁶ Bedford, p.70.

²⁷ Bedford, p.74.

²⁸ Bedford, p.36.

²⁹ Mona Tracy, *Rifle and Tomahawk*, illus. by G. Harry Evison (Auckland: Hodder & Staughton, 1983) [1927], p.13.

³⁰ Mrs Wilson was seriously wounded in the Poverty Bay raid and was kept alive for several days by her young son who managed to fetch food for her. This episode was also related in *Maori and Settler*.

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- ³¹ Tracy, *Rifle and Tomahawk*, p.184.
- ³² Tracy, *Rifle and Tomahawk*, p.151.
- ³³ Tracy, *Rifle and Tomahawk*, p.188.
- ³⁴ Ronald Syme, *Gipsy Michael*, illus. by William Stobbs (Oxford: Oxford University Press, 1954), p.121.
- ³⁵ Syme, *Gipsy Michael*, p.120.
- ³⁶ Syme, *Gipsy Michael*, p.118.
- ³⁷ Syme, *Gipsy Michael*, p.167.
- ³⁸ Gilderdale, *A Sea Change*, p.27.
- ³⁹ Owens, R. A., *Muskets and Trouble*, illus. by Russell Clark (Wellington: Reed, 1964), p.8.
- ⁴⁰ Owens, p.7.
- ⁴¹ Owens, p.7.
- ⁴² Owens, p.8.
- ⁴³ Owens, p.7.
- ⁴⁴ Owens, p.96.
- ⁴⁵ Finlayson, p.102.
- ⁴⁶ Finlayson, p.117.
- ⁴⁷ Finlayson, p.126.
- ⁴⁸ Finlayson, p.168.
- ⁴⁹ George, p.57.
- ⁵⁰ George, p.58.
- ⁵¹ *Children of the Forest* is autobiographical, but both Gilderdale's *A Sea Change* and Locke's article on 'Children's historical fiction in New Zealand' include it as a work of fiction and I accept their judgement.
- ⁵² Arthur H. Messenger, *Children of the Forest: A Frontier Tale of Old Taranaki*, illus. by the author (Auckland: Blackwood & Janet Paul, 1966), p.34.
- ⁵³ Messenger, p.35.
- ⁵⁴ Messenger, p.41.
- ⁵⁵ Messenger, p.51.
- ⁵⁶ Messenger, p.50.
- ⁵⁷ The reference is to the Biblical story from the book of Samuel about the close friendship between David and Jonathon.
- ⁵⁸ Gilderdale, 'Children's Literature', p.545.
- ⁵⁹ Elsie Locke, *The End of the Harbour*, illus. by Katarina Mataira (Auckland: Blackwood & Janet Paul, 1968), p.204.
- ⁶⁰ Ronald Leonard Bacon, *Again, the Bugles Blow*, illus. by V. J. Livingstone (Auckland: Collins, 1973), p.9.
- ⁶¹ Bacon, p.50.
- ⁶² Bacon, p.95.
- ⁶³ Bacon, p.98.
- ⁶⁴ G. K. Saunders, *The Forest Rangers* (Christchurch: Whitcoulls, 1979), p.7.
- ⁶⁵ Saunders, p.7.
- ⁶⁶ Saunders, p.51.
- ⁶⁷ Saunders, p.145.
- ⁶⁸ Elsie Locke, *Journey Under Warning*, illus. by Margaret Chapman; maps by Libby Plumridge (Auckland: Oxford University Press, 1983), p.190. I consulted the copy of the Reference Notes held by the University of Waikato Library.
- ⁶⁹ Gibby is a fictional character, but a fifteen-year-old boy is known to have been part of the survey party.
- ⁷⁰ Locke, *Journey Under Warning*, p.25.
- ⁷¹ Gilderdale, 'Children's Literature', p.545.
- ⁷² Anne de Roo, *Jacky Nobody* (Auckland: Methuen, 1983), p.48.
- ⁷³ Belich, *The New Zealand Wars*, p.61.
- ⁷⁴ Anne de Roo, *The Bats' Nest* (Auckland: Hodder & Stoughton, 1986), p.128.
- ⁷⁵ Dunlop, p.48.
- ⁷⁶ Bernard Gadd, *Blood of Tainui* (Auckland: Te Ropu Kahurangi, 1991), p.7.
- ⁷⁷ Gadd, *Blood of Tainui*, p. 138.

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- ⁷⁸ Gadd, *Blood of Tainui*, p. 138.
- ⁷⁹ Gadd, *Blood of Tainui*, p. 153.
- ⁸⁰ Gadd, *Blood of Tainui*, p. 101.
- ⁸¹ Gadd, *Blood of Tainui*, p. 69.
- ⁸² Gadd, *Blood of Tainui*, p. 174.
- ⁸³ Fleur Beale, *A Respectable Girl* (Auckland: Random House, 2006), p.173.
- ⁸⁴ Beale, *A Respectable Girl*, p.142.
- ⁸⁵ Watson, p.737.
- ⁸⁶ Watson, p.737.
- ⁸⁷ Winifred Whitehead, *Old Lies Revisited* (London: Pluto Press, 1991), p.17.
- ⁸⁸ Kate Agnew and Geoff Fox, *Children at War: From the First World War to the Gulf* (London: Continuum, 2001), p.52.
- ⁸⁹ Agnew and Fox, p.83.
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- ⁹⁷ Henty, p.251.
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¹³⁷ Gadd, *Blood of Tainui*, p.96.
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¹⁴⁰ Beale, *A Respectable Girl*, p.339.
¹⁴¹ Agnew and Fox, p.83.
¹⁴² J. S. Bratton, 'British Imperialism and the reproduction of femininity in girls' fiction, 1900-1930' in *Imperialism and Juvenile Literature*, ed. by Jeffrey Richards (Manchester: Manchester University Press, 1989), pp. 195-215 (p.196).
¹⁴³ Syme, *Gipsy Michael*, p.191.
¹⁴⁴ James Belich, *The New Zealand Wars*, Episode One, 'The War That Britain Lost'. Video, Television New Zealand Limited and Landmark Productions, 1998.
¹⁴⁵ Belich, *The New Zealand Wars*, pp.319-320.
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CHAPTER SEVEN

DREAMS OF GOLD: HISTORICAL NOVELS ABOUT THE GOLD RUSHES

“Gold for the first-comers, hunger and disappointment for the rest.”¹

Some of the economic problems caused during the 1860s by the New Zealand Wars were offset by the other major historical event of that decade – the discovery of gold, and the gold rushes which followed. The first major gold rush was in Otago, where Gabriel Read’s discovery of alluvial gold in 1861 attracted thousands of prospectors to the shanty towns which sprang up all over Central Otago. A few years later, miners of both alluvial and quartz gold descended on the West Coast, which became, in Michael King’s words, ‘the wildest frontier in the country as merchants, publicans and brothel-keepers converged to share the profits’.² Smaller gold rushes occurred in Nelson and Marlborough. The North Island had its share of gold fever from 1868 onwards, with the opening of the quartz crushing operations in Thames and other parts of the Coromandel. By the late 1870s the gold boom was over, but dredging and sluicing in the South Island and mining in the North Island continued on a smaller scale for many years.

Although the gold rushes lasted little over a decade, they had a great impact on the young colony. As King observes, ‘Gold was seen as the magic ingredient that would attract immigrants, transform sluggish economies and deliver instant prosperity to all and great riches to some.’³ New Zealand’s population swelled, and the country’s ethnic makeup was changed by the arrival of gold-seekers from many different countries; for example, there was an influx of Irish miners on the West Coast (many from the goldfields of Australia and California), while a significant number of Chinese immigrants came to Otago and the West Coast, in spite of considerable discrimination against them. The discovery of gold made an important contribution to New Zealand’s economy, on both a national and a local level. Dunedin, in particular, flourished and became the country’s largest and wealthiest city. On an individual level, personal fortunes were made and lost by gold prospectors, but the greatest financial benefits were gained by those who made their money, not by mining, but by selling supplies to the diggers. In his substantial history of the gold

rushes, *Diggers, Hatters & Whores: The Story of the New Zealand Gold Rushes*, Stevan Eldred-Grigg contends that, ‘The gold rushes were the biggest single event in the history of colonial New Zealand.’⁴ He points out that:

The waves of goldseekers and camp followers as they crashed onto the shores of the archipelago swamped nearly everybody else who had come before. Gold brought proportionately the largest single wave of white immigrants ever to come to the country.

The surge of newcomers subjected Maori land and other resources to intolerable pressure from the thronging thousands. Diggers swarmed with their winnings through the colony, buying, building, fighting, wanting land. The land hunger of those who had shovelled for gold helped to push a colony commanded by the wealthy towards what came to be called a “social laboratory”. The land hunger of those shovellers was also one of the powerful forces driving the New Zealand Wars. [...] Without the gold rushes, without the troops of the footloose ready to take the Queen’s shilling and afterwards settle on the land seized from the tribes, and without the troops of camp followers who flocked to the diggings and then spread through the colony, the colonial state might have taken at least another generation to impose its will over the hinterland of the North Island.⁵

In spite of their historical significance, the gold rushes, as Eldred-Grigg observes, have been overlooked by writers, both historians and writers of fiction. Until *Diggers, Hatters & Whores*, no full-length academic survey had been published since the 1960s, and there have been comparatively few novels. Of the six ‘most skilful novels’ about the diggings mentioned by Eldred-Grigg, two are books for children – Locke’s *The Runaway Settlers* and *Shining Rivers* by Ruth Dallas.⁶

There are, in fact, very few books for children about the gold rushes, and most of them were written comparatively recently. Unlike the pioneering period and the New Zealand Wars, both of which were fictionalized for children while they were still in progress or shortly thereafter, the gold rushes did not feature to any great extent until the 1950s; the exception being Edith Howes’ *Young Pioneers* (1924), discussed in Chapter Five, whose protagonists pick up a fortune in gold nuggets near Dunedin some years before Read’s discovery; and *Seventeen Chimneys* (1938) by Theodore Acland Harper, whose protagonist, Bob, attends the Government School of Mines in Thames, and works in a mine to fund his studies. This is the only gold rush book which describes the process of gold mining in underground tunnels, as opposed to prospecting in river beds, and also the only one to deal with the financial speculation and shady dealings involved in the mining business. Unlike the South Island

goldfields, where even a young boy might find gold by panning in a river, gold mining in Thames was a serious business conducted by men only. Bob does not find any gold on his own account, but simply works for a mining company, and since much of the book concerns Bob's other experiences it will be further discussed in Chapter Eight.

In *Young Pioneers* and *Seventeen Chimneys*, gold prospecting is not the dominant theme of the narrative, and the same applies to a number of other books in which the gold rushes feature. In *Young Jane* (1955), which will also be discussed in Chapter Eight, Tilda and Rusty's father goes to the goldfields but comes home empty-handed, and settles down to work on a farm (though the children manage to find some gold in the local river). Similarly, Adam's uncle Will, in Sutton's *Green Gold* (1976), is happy to give up gold mining after an accident. *Green Gold* is one of only three books in this survey which are set in the North Island goldfields (the others are *Seventeen Chimneys*, and *Fire in the Bracken* by S. C. George), and gold mining plays only a minor role.

Eldred-Grigg lists *The Runaway Settlers* as a novel about the gold rushes, but although the oldest son, Bill, goes to both the Otago and West Coast diggings, his adventures are barely described. Mrs Phipp's expedition to the West Coast to sell cattle does, however, give a vivid impression of the journey undertaken by many prospectors on their way to the goldfields. Gold-mining also features in *Swag and Tucker* (1993) by Margaret Hall, which is set in a small South Westland settlement twenty-two years after the gold rush of 1865. The men still prospect for gold on a small scale, mainly when unusually high tides deposit gold-bearing sand on the beach, and the most dramatic episode in the book is the theft of the gold by two armed robbers. However, the book is more concerned with the day-to-day activities of breaking in the bush for farming and living in a rugged and isolated environment, so it will be discussed in Chapter Eight.

In these books, gold prospecting is secondary to the main story, but in others it is more important; for example, four of the fourteen chapters of Syme's *Gipsy Michael* (1954) are devoted to the adventures of Michael and his shipmates when they go

prospecting for gold on the West Coast. They find gold in the first creek they try, but have their hard-won bag of gold stolen by a gang of thieves, who also rob and murder another prospector. Michael and his companions track and capture the murderers and deliver them to the magistrate at Hokitika, where they are hanged. Syme says in his Foreword:

If you think Michael Benson's discovery of gold in the Southern Alps is a bit far-fetched, then it will interest you to know that this incident is based on fact. [...] More surprising, perhaps, is that those unpleasant rogues who stole Captain Christian's gold and murdered James de Pontius – amongst others – were real characters.⁷

As noted in previous chapters, Syme based individual episodes of this book on actual events – in this case the Maungatapu murders – but he changes the dates to suit his narrative. He places the episode in 1863 rather than 1866, and has his protagonists playing a pivotal role in the arrests of the murderers. However, he paints a realistic picture of the toil involved in panning for gold, and the endless stream of hopeful prospectors arriving in the hope of making their fortunes. One of the characters, a veteran of the Californian goldfields, sums up their prospects; ““Gold for the first-comers, hunger and disappointment for the rest.””⁸

The protagonists of Margery Godfrey's *South for Gold* (1964) are among the fortunate first-comers. The three Tarnsley brothers and their friend Hein already have a prosperous claim on the West Coast when, on an expedition across the Southern Alps, they discover a rich vein of gold in the Wilberforce River on the Canterbury side and make enough money to buy their dream farm. Although the actual gold-prospecting is hard work and the climate is harsh, with violent storms which often sweep away the gold-bearing dust they had been mining, the Tarnsleys do not face any real hardships. They live in a comfortable log cabin, always have enough to eat, and have frequent trips to Hokitika to buy stores and visit friends. Despite the implication of the title, the trip to the South Island in search of gold occupies less than half of the book, with the first ten chapters devoted to the adventures of the two younger Tarnsley boys, nine-year-old Peter and thirteen-year-old Jim, in Northland. They are separated from their father when a fire destroys their gum-digging camp, and are eventually rescued by the Dalmatian trader, Ivan Ivanovich, who finds a home for them with his German friend Hein. The last seven chapters describe the

boys' trip to the West Coast with Hein and their older brother Geoff, their successful gold prospecting, and their reunion with their father.

No dates are given in *South for Gold*, but the mention of events such the war between Maori and British forces and the opening of the road over Arthur's Pass indicate that it is set in the mid 1860s. Although the story is unrealistically positive (there are no villains, only good characters, and there are many fortunate co-incidences) the background, from farming and gum-digging in Northland to gold prospecting and exploring in the Southern Alps, was, according to the blurb on the dust-jacket, based on the experiences of the author and those of people she interviewed:

The authenticity of the story comes from the writer's long and loving familiarity with her native countryside, from her knowledge of the tales (still told with first-hand vividness) of pioneering days, and from her careful supplementing of all this by a reading of local records and other original documents. History is still alive to those who are alive to it; and Margery Godfrey herself remembers her father digging kauri-gum to add to his income as a farmer; she remembers her mother, without a word, packing the family valuables under threat of a bush fire like the one in the story. She has talked with some of the old gold-miners and with other pioneers, of all kinds and nationalities.⁹

Unlike Godfrey, S. C. George, the author of *Fire in the Bracken* (1966), is English rather than a New Zealander, and therefore lacks Godfrey's familiarity with the local landscape and history. As mentioned earlier, *Fire in the Bracken* is set in the North Island, but the description of the gold-diggings suggests that George has based it on accounts of gold prospecting in the South Island; for example the river is described as being jade-green in colour, and while a number of South Island glacier-fed rivers are this shade, there are none in the North Island. Further descriptions of the diggings are also unlike anything found in the vicinity of Auckland where the story is set. The river is at the foot of a 'rock wall dropping almost sheer for hundreds of feet. The roar of the swollen torrent filled the ravine with its thunderous echoes. Huge boulders rolling along its bed and falling trees increased the din.'¹⁰ In spite of this inhospitable terrain, the ravine is home to a cheerful little community of miners, who pitch their tents among the boulders, prospect for gold during the day, 'seldom [winning] less than half an ounce a day – sometimes as much as an ounce';¹¹ and in the evening gather round the campfire for a sing-along. George introduces a unique

element to gold-rush literature for children by having the miners become embroiled in the New Zealand Wars. (While many former gold diggers did join the militia and fight in the wars, they did not engage in both occupations simultaneously.) The miners build a stockade for protection and successfully repel a Maori attack, but when Jim's friend Tiapora comes to warn them that the fighting is spreading, the miners decide to abandon their claims and retreat to the safety of Auckland.

As indicated in the earlier discussion on *Fire in the Bracken*, in Chapters Five and Six, George was concerned more with telling an exciting story than with providing an historically accurate account of New Zealand's past. The gold-miners in the book are (literally) colourful characters who exist mainly to add interest to the plot, as in the description of Jim's gold-mining mate, Jake:

His high slouch hat, tipped over his eyes, curled up sharply in the front and down at the back, and it had a crimson cord round its crown. His face was lean and hard, but his eyes were friendly. His gaudy check shirt disappeared into a pair of moleskin trousers, and a crimson silk scarf was knotted comfortably about his neck. The trousers were the bright yellow of clay which he seemed to have washed into, rather than out of, them, and their colour clashed violently with another crimson sash about his waist. The pearl handle of a knife projected from a leather sheath on his belt.

"Holiday dress, sonny," he said, catching my eye upon him. "In the South Island, where I used to work, every digger dresses like this in town."¹²

The five other books about the gold-rushes are all set in Otago. The earliest, *Hunter's Gold*, is based on the 1976 television series of that name scripted by Roger Simpson, and its origin is obvious from the book's structure. It is divided into thirteen 'episodes' (rather than chapters) with cliff-hanger endings, and it is illustrated on almost every page with photographs in either black and white or colour from the television series. The fast-paced story cuts from one scene to another with no connecting narrative, and features a gallery of picturesque but one-dimensional characters – a solitary miner who has become a mad 'hatter'; a group of Chinese market gardeners; an attractive Irish grogshop owner with a heart of gold; a travelling magician; an unscrupulous shopkeeper; an officious police sergeant; several fairly inept villains; and a background cast of 'rough, tough men reminiscent of the American wild west'.¹³ The story is padded out with episodes which do not necessarily advance the plot but add drama and excitement; for example a magician

riding the rapids of the Arrow River in a barrel, a fire which burns down the grogshop, and a boxing match between two minor characters.

The plot concerns the search by thirteen-year-old Scott Hunter for his father who has failed to return from gold-prospecting at Tucker's Gully in Central Otago. Scott stows away on a dray bound for the goldfields and, after a series of adventures, arrives in Tucker's Gully, where he is befriended by Molly Grogan, owner of the local grogshop. He finds that his father is suspected of murdering his partner, Pat Reilly, in order to steal the gold Reilly had just discovered. In fact, Hunter has been captured by the murderers, who are trying to coerce him into revealing the location of the gold strike. Scott is also captured, but manages to escape and bring the villains to justice. The story ends happily with father and son reunited and set to make their fortune from Reilly's claim (with a cut to go to Reilly's sister).

Hunter's Gold was written from Roger Simpson's television script by Philippa Mansfield, and it demonstrates the difference between an author reworking his own script as a novel, as Maurice Gee did with *The Fire-raiser* and *The Champion*, and a writer adapting someone else's script. While Gee's books are successful novels in their own right and bear little evidence of their original form, Mansfield follows the television script so closely that the writing is often clumsy and disjointed. The abrupt transitions between scenes necessitated by the television format do not translate well to the page, as they disrupt the flow of the narrative; and the lack of the original visual clues creates confusion as to where and when a scene is taking place. As mentioned, there is no connecting narrative, and Mansfield only rarely supplies helpful indications such as 'next morning' or 'later that afternoon'. There are no descriptions of settings, characters or period details, and the reader is left to gather this information from the accompanying photographs. As a result, *Hunter's Gold* is very much 'the book of the television series' rather than an independent novel. Nevertheless, *Hunter's Gold* established a pattern for subsequent books set in the Otago goldfields, and many of the themes and characters – the young boy running away to the goldfields in search of his father; the Chinese market gardeners who are badly treated by the miners; the gruff Irish policeman – reappear in later novels.

Johnie, the protagonist of *Shining Rivers* (1979), by Ruth Dallas, runs away from his mother and his job as a baker's boy in Dunedin, not to find his father, but because he wants to find enough gold to fulfill his dead father's wish of buying a farm. The story begins, 'I caught the gold fever when I was a boy of fourteen';¹⁴ and it is 'gold fever' which keeps Johnie at the goldfields in spite of all hardships. Johnie teams up with an old miner, Tatey, and they stake a claim at Gabriel's Gully, but they are not as lucky as the prospectors in the earlier books. At times they find gold, but it is gambled away by Tatey, or stolen by other prospectors, and most of the time they barely make a living:

We worked a number of deserted claims those first few months, at first in frost and rain, cold and wet to the skin, and, later, in summer, almost roasted alive on the hot stones of that shadeless valley. All that time we remained on mere tucker ground, and I had to be quick to take the gold to the stores before Tatey lost it playing cards. [...] We were working really hard, with aching backs, wet feet and blistered hands, and all we were getting was enough return to keep ourselves alive.¹⁵

Their fortunes change when Tatey finds gold in a remote valley, but disaster strikes; firstly Johnie discovers the body of his former fellow-worker, Tony, who has died of starvation, and then a flash flood sweeps away their camp and drowns their two companions. Johnie is rescued by a kindly shepherd and his wife and decides to return home, but he has not yet shaken off the gold fever, and goes back to the goldfields. By the time he finally gives up, it is too late to achieve his dream of building a house for his mother, as she has remarried. Johnie has just enough gold to buy a piece of land next door to his mother's new home and settle down as a farmer.

The picture Dallas paints of life on the goldfields is one of unremitting toil, uncertain returns, and frequent tragedy. The illustrations, such as that of Johnie finding Tony's dead body, with its gaping mouth and staring eyes, also emphasise the hardships of the gold diggers' lives. However, Dallas also conveys the strength of the gold fever which grips the prospectors and keeps them working, in spite of the hardships. As well, she evokes the harsh beauty of the Central Otago landscape. Dallas made her name as a poet before she turned to writing for children, and *Shining Rivers* is distinguished by its simple but poetic language and sensitivity to the landscape. Johnie, unlike his fellow prospectors, feels a kinship with his environment:

I saw the sun come up and I saw it go down, and I saw the moon pass, but nothing else passed, unless you counted the wind, which often blew in the tussocks. It may sound strange, but I formed a kind of friendship with the stream, which was a river really, low because of the fine autumn weather.

The river was always busy, and its voice was cheerful, as though it sang, and it was full of coloured stones, as well as gold. The stones were green or red or marble-white or speckled. The water was crystal-clear and no matter how often we muddied it, the mud would settle and the water ran clear again. [...] We washed in it, we ill-treated it, we stole from it, but it still ran clear and sang.¹⁶



Illustration by Gareth Floyd for *Shining Rivers* by Ruth Dallas, p.99.

Eve Sutton's *Valley of Heavenly Gold* (1987) is also about a fourteen-year-old boy who goes to the Central Otago goldfields in search of gold. Matthew Hamilton's situation, however, is rather different from Johnie's. His parents own a store in a Central Otago town, and his trip to the goldfields is merely a brief expedition to retrieve the gold his father had hidden there. The main events of the story, therefore, occur over a period of only a few days, not several years as in *Shining Rivers*. Sutton fills the plot with exciting incidents, such as an attack on a Chinese market gardener; the discovery of Mr Hamilton's gold cache in an isolated valley; an armed robbery; and a flash flood which wipes out half of the goldfield, drowning one of the miners. Matthew and his Chinese friend, Ah Chong, narrowly escape from the flood which destroys the little valley where Mr Hamilton's gold was hidden, but not before they have managed, in the space of a few hours, to find another thirty ounces of gold. In spite of their success, neither of them wishes to return to the goldfields. Ah Chong plans to go back to China to become a healer like his father, and, inspired by his example, Matthew decides he wants to get an education and study languages so that he can learn about Chinese medicine.

No dates are given, but *Valley of Heavenly Gold* seems to be set a few years later than *Shining Rivers*. The town where the Hamilton family live is comparatively well-established; there are families living there, not just gold miners, and there are shops, a bank, livery stables and hospital (though no school). The town is not named, and no exact location is given, but there is mention of supplies coming from Cromwell, presumably the nearest settlement. The goldfield where many of the town's men are working is several hours' ride from the town, but even that is more civilised than the primitive conditions endured by Johnie and his mates:

The goldfield was like a little town. It spread out on both sides of the river in a jumble of tents and sheds and huts, each on its own small patch. There were horses too, tethered alongside some of the tents. Everywhere the men were busy. [...] I smelled the sharp tang of wood smoke, mixed with that other smell of bacon and chops sizzling over the miners' fires.¹⁷

There is a Warden in charge of the goldfield, and several women live there with their husbands.

Although *Valley of Heavenly Gold*, like Sutton's other historical novels, is well-researched and has an interesting story to tell, the plot seems almost secondary to the theme of racial discrimination against the Chinese. Ah Chong, the Chinese market gardener/miner/healer plays a major role in the narrative, and is presented as an admirable character. The prejudice against him and his cousin, Wong Lee, among the other miners and townspeople is contrasted with the attitude of the Hamilton family, who not only accept them as friends, but embrace their knowledge of Chinese medicine and join them in a venture to make and sell Chinese medicines and ointments.

Ken Catran also explores the relationship between Chinese and European gold prospectors in *Lin and the Red Stranger* (2003). While Sutton is sympathetic to the Chinese characters in *Valley of Heavenly Gold*, the point of view is that of a British boy, and the Chinese remain 'other'. Catran's novel is the first to give a Chinese perspective, and, even more unusual, that of a Chinese girl. Alternate sections of the narrative are focalized by Lin, a young Chinese girl, and Declan, an Irishman on the run after a botched robbery in Australia. Their paths occasionally cross, initially on the ship bringing them to Dunedin, and later on the goldfields. Lin is the servant of Master Choy, one of a group of Chinese who have bought an old claim near the town of Boot Creek. 'It had been worked by Foreign Devil miners but they were rough fools who missed as much gold as they found. They were Heavenly People and their industry would make them rich.'¹⁸ In fact, the Chinese leave the goldfields when their camp is attacked by a gang of white diggers, but Master Choy earns a reward after finding stolen gold (the spoils of an armed hold-up in which Declan was involved), and has enough money to buy land in New Zealand.

Lin is a credible and likeable character, but Declan is less so. He uses his poverty-stricken background in Ireland as a justification for stealing money and a horse, and, more seriously, taking part in armed robberies in both Australia and New Zealand. His occasional casual acts of kindness towards Lin are motivated merely by the fact that she reminds him of his young sister. Nevertheless, the device of filtering the narrative through two very different but complementary viewpoints allows the author to create a more complex picture of the goldfields than that of the previous books

which are focalized by young English boys. Both Lin and Declan are outsiders and see the mining camp and its inhabitants from a different perspective than the characters in other gold-mining books who are part of the ethnic majority. Lin, especially, as a foreigner and a girl, finds ‘Big Nose’ people and their ways incomprehensible and terrifying. As the only female gold prospector to feature in any of the novels, she has concerns which the males do not; for example, she is worried that her red hands and broken nails from washing the gravel will deter a future husband.

Catran has taken some liberties with the historical record, as he acknowledges in a note which precedes the text, in which he points out that the first recorded presence of a Chinese woman in New Zealand was 1895 (at least thirty years later than the apparent date of this story). Other than this, Catran does not discuss the historical background of *Lin and the Red Stranger*, though it is clear that his research included reading previous children’s books about the gold rush. Declan’s gold-mining mate, Ambrose, is very similar to Tatey in *Shining Rivers*, and the police sergeant has the same name (O’Halloran) and physical appearance as the sergeant in *Hunter’s Gold*.¹⁹

The most recent gold rush book, *Finding Father: The Journal of Mary Brogan, Otago, 1862* (2004) by Pauline Cartwright, also has a girl’s perspective, albeit that of a girl disguised as a boy. It is one of the ‘My Story’ series, written in the form of a diary by a thirteen-year-old girl, who, like Scott in *Hunter’s Gold*, has run away to the goldfields to look for her missing father. The diary device strains credulity, as it seems highly unlikely that a young girl on her own in a strange place, cold and hungry, and with no shelter other than ‘a curve of rock, too shallow to be called a cave, with a jumble of rocks in front to hide me’,²⁰ would calmly sit down (in the dark!) and write several pages of description and speculation: ‘Dust and sand fly about in the wind, and the sun set early behind the huge hills. Is this township, close by the great blue Molyneux River that swirls through the deep gorges, really the heart of a place where men’s dreams of riches will come true?’²¹

It also seems unlikely that Mary, who hitherto has led a sheltered existence helping her mother and attending school, would cope so well with living on her own in the

rough environment of the goldfields. She is ‘a little frightened’ by the number of drunken men she encounters, but adds that ‘it all seemed much more interesting than our quiet Sundays back home’.²² Even when she is kidnapped, her presence of mind does not desert her, and she contrives to escape unharmed. Other aspects of the plot are equally implausible; for example, the fact that Mary’s disguise is never penetrated even though she lives in close quarters with the gold prospectors for over a month; and that none of them recognize her on the occasions when she dresses as a girl and sings in the streets to earn some money. The fact that her father, who has been missing for seven years, happens to be at the very goldfield where Mary has decided to search is another rather unlikely coincidence. Although the plot and the narrative format are lacking in credibility, the actual historical background has been well-researched, and as the author lives in Clyde, where the story is set, the physical setting is also true to life. The book concludes with a six-page ‘Historical Note’ about the Otago gold rushes, a bibliography, and five pages of photographs taken in the 1860s, of Dunedin and Clyde and various gold prospectors.

The historical novels for children dealing with the gold rushes, from *Gipsy Michael* published in 1954 to *Finding Father*, written fifty years later, have many features in common. All except the two most recent books have as their protagonists teenage boys, most of whom strike it rich on the goldfields and become wealthy (even Johnie in *Shining Rivers* eventually makes enough to buy some land). The books also convey the hardship involved in gold prospecting and the harsh conditions of the diggings. Eldred-Grigg notes the high numbers of deaths among the diggers from starvation, diseases caused by poor sanitation, rock falls, snow storms, or, most often, from drowning in the turbulent rivers or in flash floods. ‘The death toll among diggers during the gold rushes was heavier than that of soldiers during the New Zealand Wars.’²³ Most of the novels reflect this in the deaths of minor characters, mainly through drowning. In deference to the age of their readers, there is little reference to the other common evils of goldfields life – the violence, drunkenness, gambling and prostitution that characterised the shanty towns which sprang up around the diggings – except in *Shining Rivers*, where Tatey regularly gambles away all his gold, and *Lin and the Red Stranger*, in which Declan’s mate Ambrose dies after a drunken spree.

While the version of the gold rushes in historical fiction for children is to some extent sanitised for young readers, the books nevertheless present gold prospecting as an exciting but ultimately undesirable occupation for their young protagonists. For the main characters in all of the books, gold mining is simply a means to an end, a way to make enough money to buy a farm (*South for Gold*, *Hunter's Gold*, *Fire in the Bracken*, *Shining Rivers*), or set up a business (*Gipsy Michael*, *Valley of Heavenly Gold*, *Lin and the Red Stranger*, *Finding Father*). Johnie is the only main character who has 'gold fever' and keeps prospecting for an extended period, but he finally gives up, and it is only minor characters like Tatey and Ambrose for whom gold-mining is a way of life. None of the young protagonists continue digging, and significant adults also desist, either because they have failed to find gold, like Rusty and Tilda's father in *Young Jane*; or because they have found sufficient for their needs, like the children's father in *Young Pioneers*, and Will's uncle in *Green Gold*. The two former return to farming, while the latter sets up a plant nursery. All three illustrate what Nelson Wattie refers to as 'a common theme' in literature about the gold rushes, both for adults and children: 'the contrast between the goldfields adventure and the pastoral world, with the moral advantage given to the latter'.²⁴

In book after book, the adventurous and essentially unproductive life of the diggers is compared unfavourably with the stable and constructive pastoral lifestyle. In *The Runaway Settlers*, Bill returns from the goldfields destitute and starving; and another unsuccessful digger tells Mrs Phipps, "'you stick to the cows they wont let you down like the yellor metal or the fiery likker.'" ²⁵ Jim, in *Fire in the Bracken*, invests the money he has made from gold-mining in the farm of his benefactor, Mr Bates. 'Gold isn't everything. I feel I'm doing something worthwhile here. With gold, you take from the earth and put nothing back.'²⁶ When Johnie is rescued by the shepherd in *Shining Rivers*, he meditates on the differences between their ways of life:

I liked Reuben Cheyne very much, and wished I could be like him, and I liked Mary Cheyne, who made me homesick, not only for my mother, but for a proper home, with a fire, and roof and walls and candles. I was tired of living under canvas, in a stony river bed, getting wet to my thighs and lying down in my clothes at night. Most of all, I was tired of living among men who had grown like the stones they worked among, hard and unfeeling, and who thought of only one

thing, gold. And if I stayed with them, I would become just like them, I knew, because I would have to become hardened to survive.²⁷

Johnie eventually abandons the diggings to buy a piece of land.

Matthew, in *Valley of Heavenly Gold*, wishes to be a doctor rather than a farmer, but Sutton, like the other authors, questions the morality of gold mining. Her attitude is summarized in the words she ascribes to the wife of the Warden of the goldfield, and which Matthew quotes to his father in the last line of the book; “‘Gold costs too much. It’s never worth it!’”²⁸ ‘Gold fever’ is seen as a bad thing which takes men from their families; Matthew’s father has left his wife and children to run the shop while he goes prospecting, much to his wife’s displeasure; and another miner, Jim Bailey, is roundly criticized by Mrs Hamilton for “‘gadding off to the goldfields” when his wife was sick and needed him’.”²⁹ Gold fever makes men almost inhuman:

Ah Chong went on relentlessly with his digging and washing, doing the work of two men while I got my breath back. As I watched him, I thought – “So that’s what gold does to you”. The black Chinese eyes glittered, his whole face was tight with a kind of passion. He’d forgotten his life in China, forgotten his family, his sick father. His only thought was for the gold.³⁰

Fortunately Ah Chong’s fever is of short duration; when the gold-bearing gravel is washed away in the flood, he returns to normal. Matthew’s experiences cure him of his wish to become a prospector and he declares that he will never go back to the goldfields. His father has also had enough of gold digging and returns to shop-keeping, as does Mary’s father in *Finding Father*. They will gain more gold by selling food to the miners than by digging for it themselves.

At the end of *South for Gold*, the Tarnsleys have found enough gold to buy a farm, affirming the desirability of the pastoral lifestyle. Nevertheless, this book does not have the same dichotomy between pastoral stability and goldfields adventure as the books already discussed. Gold digging is not seen as the chancy, unpleasant, and dangerous occupation of the other books, and the Tarnsleys are spectacularly successful at finding gold with comparatively little effort. The boys and their father figure, Hein, live a settled life as a family group in a snug log cottage with a garden, in effect combining the benefits of both the pastoral and goldfields lifestyles. The

same is true of *Swag and Tucker*, whose families combine farming and gold digging in a small West Coast beach-mining settlement, and use their gold to buy livestock. The underlying message of these books is that gold mining is not a desirable occupation in itself, but that it can function as a means of achieving the immigrant dream of owning a farm or a business.

One notable feature of historical novels about the gold rushes is that they introduce a wider variety of characters than other books set during this time, reflecting the change made to New Zealand's ethnic makeup by the influx of diggers from many different countries. Since most of these novels are comparatively recent, they also reflect the need to model the concept of New Zealand as a multi-cultural and multi-ethnic society. Narratives about immigration and the New Zealand Wars focus almost exclusively on the encounter between Britons (mainly English) and Maori, with only a few non-British characters such as the eccentric Hungarian count in *The Adventures of Johnny Van Bart*, and the Prussian Captain von Tempsky who features in several of the books about the wars. However, although all but one of the gold rush books has an English protagonist, Chinese, European and Irish characters also appear in important roles. As already mentioned, *Valley of Heavenly Gold* and *Lin and the Red Stranger* deal with the Chinese miners, who made up the most distinctive ethnic group at the Otago diggings, and suffered the worst discrimination. *Valley of Heavenly Gold* opens with an attack on Ah Chong by three miners, and a discussion between Matthew, his two sisters, and their mother about local attitudes to the Chinese. The children are admirably open-minded and cannot understand the prejudice against them, but their more pragmatic mother points out that she cannot alienate her customers by challenging their anti-Chinese sentiments. However, in an abrupt change of mind, she decides to go into partnership with the two Chinese market gardeners to make Chinese medicines and ointments. Matthew makes friends with Ah Chong, but continues to see him as alien, someone who looks different, eats strange food, and has unusual customs.

Catran's use of a dual narrative in *Lin and the Red Stranger* highlights the British and Chinese characters' mutual incomprehension of each others' cultures. There are inevitable misunderstandings between the 'Heavenly People' and the 'Foreign

Devils': some serious, such as an attack on the Chinese camp by miners suspicious of the way the Chinese are managing to find gold in an old claim; and some amusing, such as the visit by the local policeman to the camp:

Another roaring flood of words came from the bearded lips, like rocks grinding.

"So ye are the Chinese, and a fine set of bluidy rascals ye look!"

Hing translated in a respectful murmur. "The sergeant says we are fresh-made, blood-covered and crafty."

Lin shivered, her eyes also on the ground. What awful insults. Another rock-grinding bellow split the air.

"Now ye behave yourself, because I am a bigger bluidy rascal and ye shall learn."

Hing's pigtail bobbed again as she [sic] translated. "The sergeant says we must behave because he is also blood-covered and crafty and can teach us a great deal."³¹

The other focalizer, Declan, also belongs to an ethnic minority, and is one of the few Irish characters to have a major role in a New Zealand historical novel; earlier novels almost invariably relegated Irishmen and women to roles as servants and comic relief. This applies to a certain extent to *Hunters' Gold*, in which the ineffectual policeman, O'Halloran, and feisty grog-shop owner, Molly Grogan, are stereotypical characters. More realistic Irish characters feature in *Swag and Tucker* and *South for Gold*; in fact, the former is centred on a settlement of predominantly Irish families and is focalized by an Irish girl, Mary.

Irish characters are less prominent in *South for Gold*, but this book has an unusually cosmopolitan cast of characters; the Tarnsleys are English, but they have several Maori friends, and on the West Coast they mingle with miners from Australia, Ireland, Scotland, America and Europe. In particular, there are several European characters who play an important role in the plot and bring reminders of European culture to the new colony. Ivan Ivanovich fled to New Zealand after a failed uprising in his home country, with his wife Rosita, a former opera singer. Their home is quite unlike the spartan colonial houses of other books – it is surrounded by grapevines and flowers, it is large enough to accommodate their seven children and many guests, and it has a wine cellar where Mr Ivanovich makes wine 'in the old way, but in a cask of New Zealand totara wood'.³² Mr and Mrs Ivanovich sing arias from operas, and their eldest daughter Maria takes singing lessons and gives concerts. Hein is equally cultured, and his house, though small, has shelves of books and hundreds of pictures

on the walls. As Heinrich von Vogelsang, he was a distinguished scholar at a German university, and at the end of the book he is planning to return to academic life, teaching geology and history at ‘a high school which might one day become a university’.³³

Characters of various nationalities are differentiated by their ways of speaking. In the case of the O’Flanagans, an Irish family from Hokitika, the author indicates ‘Irishness’ through the use of clichéd expressions such as ‘Mother of God’ and ‘for sure’:

“Mother of God!” said Mrs O’Flanagan eloquently, as she answered the call. “Here’s Geoff back with his brothers and a mate, and me with not a spare bed in the house. For sure, it’ll have to be the room beyond the stables again, and feel for the softest plank!”³⁴

Ivan Ivanovich, too, has a distinctive speech pattern, and his non-English background is reflected in inversions of the usual word order and indiscriminate use of the definite article:

“We steal not each other’s customers, but here you have the gum to sell me, yes? And I have the sugar, the tea, the tobacco, flour and canned meat. Yes, the new shirts also, the pants, the socks, and even the so beautiful new mouth organ that small boys love.”³⁵

Ivanovich is described as talking:

as much with his hands as he did with his quick, gay voice. There were the words he used too. Sometimes they were English, sometimes foreign, but they stood out like splashes of paint. “Magnificent” was one of the best, but when that didn’t seem quite enough, he raised his eyes, waved his expressive hands, and either rattled off the names of his favourite saints, or exclaimed about little miracles.³⁶

The illustrations show Ivanovich’s difference in visual terms as well, contrasting his dapper appearance with double-breasted waistcoat, spotted cravat, and splendid waxed moustache with the more conventional attire of the English Tarnsleys.



Illustration by Clyde Pearson for *South for Gold* by Margery Godfrey, p.23.

Although the author celebrates the diversity brought by European immigrants, she does not challenge the idea of New Zealand as a predominantly English country. Croatian Ivan, Austrian Hein, and the French priest, ‘the three men of the old world’, drink a toast to the English Tarnsley brothers: “‘The new men of adventure in the new country’”.³⁷ The implication is that the new country of New Zealand belongs to the ‘new men’ of English birth. However, the prospective marriage between Geoff Tarnsley and Ivan’s daughter Maria suggests that British blood may be diluted in future generations, as does the engagement of Irish Mary and Croatian Nikolas in *Swag and Tucker*.

The fact that almost all of the historical novels about the gold rushes have teenage boys as their protagonists reflects the historical reality: ‘Gold diggings were always a world of men, above all young men, working hard’.³⁸ The two most recent books, *Lin and the Red Stranger* and *Finding Father*, attempt to redress the gender balance retrospectively, by introducing three ahistorical Chinese women as part of a group of diggers in the 1860s, and by having a female protagonist going to the goldfields disguised as a boy. However, while these books give their female characters larger roles, they do not suggest that girls actually had the same freedom as boys at that time. Lin joins the male members of the group in panning for gold, but she is not regarded as an equal, although this could be attributed to her status as a servant as well as to her gender. Mary dresses as a boy because she realizes it would be unsafe for a young girl to be at the goldfields on her own, but she does not want to be a boy in reality; while she says it will be frustrating not to be able to ‘wander about at will, or join the men in their work or in their after-work pastimes,’³⁹ she is happy to be a girl again, and enjoys wearing dresses rather than trousers. The difference in male and female roles during the nineteenth century is not really pursued in *Finding Father*, but finds a more overt expression in *Valley of Heavenly Gold*, where Matthew’s younger sister Rachel constantly complains about the inequity of not being allowed to do the things her brother does: “‘It isn’t fair – why do boys have all the fun?’”⁴⁰ Rachel briefly experiences the fun of being a boy when she dresses in her brother’s clothes and rides off to the goldfields, but her exploit lasts for a few hours only, not several weeks as in Mary’s case. Rachel is compared unfavourably with her sister Ruth, who is quiet and well-behaved, and will ‘make a splendid wife for someone some day’.⁴¹ The only female who has any degree of autonomy is Molly Grogan, but she is an adult rather than a young girl, and is, moreover, engaged in a the dubious occupation of running a grog-shop. The implication in the novels considered in this chapter is that goldfields’ adventures are only for boys. Respectable English females cannot participate – only ‘foreigners’ like Chinese Lin, or Irish Molly, or girls who temporarily cross gender lines and take on a boy’s persona.

Overall, historical novels about the gold rushes display an ambivalent attitude to both the influx of gold-diggers from non-British nations, and the morality of gold mining

itself. However, the reward of successful digging – sufficient gold to set up a business or buy a farm – is seen as desirable, as it enables immigrants to establish themselves in their new country. The following chapter considers novels about those who have made the transition from immigrants to settlers.

¹ Syme, *Gipsy Michael*, p.107.

² King, p.207.

³ King, p.205.

⁴ Stevan Eldred-Grigg, *Diggers, Hatters & Whores: The Story of the New Zealand Gold Rushes* (Auckland: Random House, 2008), p.494.

⁵ Eldred-Grigg, *Diggers*, p.497.

⁶ Eldred-Grigg, *Diggers*, p.496.

⁷ Syme, *Gipsy Michael*, p.5.

⁸ Syme, *Gipsy Michael*, p.107.

⁹ Margery Godfrey, *South for Gold*, illus by Clyde Pearson (London: Andre Deutsch, 1964), rear dust-jacket.

¹⁰ George, p.37.

¹¹ George, p.38.

¹² George, p.35.

¹³ Gilderdale, *A Sea Change*, p. 61.

¹⁴ Ruth Dallas, *Shining Rivers*, illus. by Gareth Floyd (Auckland: Methuen, 1979), p.9.

¹⁵ Dallas, *Shining Rivers*, p.83.

¹⁶ Dallas, *Shining Rivers*, pp.95-96.

¹⁷ Eve Sutton, *Valley of Heavenly Gold* (Wellington: Mallinson Rendell, 1987), p.46.

¹⁸ Ken Catran, *Lin and the Red Stranger* (Auckland: Random House, 2003), p.32.

¹⁹ *Lin and the Red Stranger* is marred by careless editing; for example, on page 12, Declan is glad he has shaved off his distinctive red beard, yet on page 22, later the same day, he turns up his collar to hide his beard; and he throws down the same stolen wallet twice in successive paragraphs on page 21.

²⁰ Pauline Cartwright, *Finding Father: The Journal of Mary Brogan, Otago, 1862* (Auckland: Scholastic, 2004), p.37.

²¹ Cartwright, p.36.

²² Cartwright, p.37.

²³ Eldred-Grigg, *Diggers*, p.315.

²⁴ Harvey McQueen and Roger Robinson, 'Gold', in *The Oxford Companion to New Zealand Literature*, ed. by Roger Robinson and Nelson Wattie (Auckland: Oxford University Press, 1999), pp.209-211 (p.210).

²⁵ Locke, *The Runaway Settlers*, p.166.

²⁶ George, p.80.

²⁷ Dallas, *Shining Rivers*, pp.119-120.

²⁸ Sutton, *Valley of Heavenly Gold*, p.111.

²⁹ Sutton, *Valley of Heavenly Gold*, p.24.

³⁰ Sutton, *Valley of Heavenly Gold*, p.78.

³¹ Catran, *Lin and the Red Stranger*, p.35.

³² Godfrey, *South for Gold* p.87.

³³ Godfrey, p.169.

³⁴ Godfrey, p.96.

³⁵ Godfrey, p.22.

³⁶ Godfrey, p.21.

³⁷ Godfrey, p.87.

³⁸ Eldred-Grigg, *Diggers*, p.367.

³⁹ Cartwright, p. 151.

⁴⁰ Sutton, *Valley of Heavenly Gold*, p.99.

⁴¹ Sutton, *Valley of Heavenly Gold*, p.7.

CHAPTER EIGHT

‘A PLACE OF HABITATION RATHER THAN ISLANDS OF EXILE’:

NEW ZEALAND COLONIAL NOVELS FOR CHILDREN

“You see, we’re Colonials, and that makes a difference.”¹

There is a chronological overlap between the books in this chapter and those in the chapters on the early settlers; but while the previous chapters considered novels about the process of emigration and settlement, this chapter deals with books about people who are already living in New Zealand. As indicated in the Introduction, this thesis deals only with historical fiction set prior to 1900, since novels set during the twentieth century do not on the whole share the same preoccupations as those set during the nineteenth century and earlier. Most of the historical novels discussed in this chapter are set during the later part of the nineteenth century, a time when, as Peter Gibbons notes, ‘there had been a shift in cultural perceptions for a considerable number of European New Zealanders. Britain was still ‘Home’ even for those born in New Zealand, but New Zealand was ‘home’ too.’² The major events of this period – the New Zealand Wars and the gold rushes – have been considered in previous chapters. Other notable happenings, such as the move from provincial to centralized government in 1875, the development of a party political system, and the impact of the introduction of refrigerated shipping, do not feature in fiction for children. However, the Long Depression (1877-93) and the effect of falling wool prices on the New Zealand economy play a role in a number of books. The single most dramatic event of this period, the eruption of Mount Tarawera in 1886 and the resulting destruction of the Pink and White Terraces and the village of Te Wairoa (the Buried Village), is the subject of four historical novels for children, and these will be considered in a separate section.

Most of the books about the colonial period deal with the everyday life of the settlers, who are almost invariably farming families carving out a living in the bush. As historian Jeanine Graham has pointed out, children had an important role in ensuring the success of these ventures:

In the vast majority of cases pioneer children were expected to work and, both within and outside of the home, their labour was essential to the functioning and economic viability of the family enterprise. Older children fetched and carried for younger siblings from an extremely young age. Such was the labour-intensive nature of pioneering life that many parents felt they had no option but to involve their children in tasks not all of which were in keeping with a youngster's age and strength. [...] Children growing up in rural locations especially absorbed an ethic in which the character-building benefits of hard work were reiterated without question. For town children too, childhood was often brief. [...] In the years before compulsory elementary schooling, many entered unpaid domestic service at a very young age, often barely nine or ten. Rural children were an unpaid labour force even earlier.³

This situation is reflected in most of these novels, and the young protagonists are almost all shown as involved in domestic or farming chores. Education and the leisure to read or pursue hobbies are often unattainable luxuries.

The first junior novel which dealt with the experience of living in this country rather than the process of arriving and making a new life here was *The Runaway Princess*, which appeared in 1929, and was, as the title suggests, a romantic rather than realistic picture of colonial life. Isabel Maud Peacocke (1881-1973) was one of New Zealand's earliest and most prolific writers for children. Most of her twenty-five children's books, written between 1914 and 1939, are family stories set in Auckland, and *The Runaway Princess* is Peacocke's only work of historical fiction. Peacocke's description of the historical setting – 'In the early days of the settlement of New Zealand [...] after the Maori War which ended in the complete victory of the British over the natives'⁴ – reflects the attitude of her time. Peacocke draws parallels between the period in which the book is set and the time of writing, when New Zealand was still affected by the aftermath of the First World War: 'The Maoris had always been splendid fighters and generous foes, but just as in our own time, war left behind it a bitter restlessness and recklessness, and lawless ideas which certain hot-blooded young natives made no attempts to subdue.'⁵

One of these 'hot-blooded young natives' is the chief, Te Huia, who believes that 'the English had stolen the natives' land from them, destroyed their homes and killed their warriors without any justification'⁶, and that he therefore has 'the moral right to revenge himself upon them in any way he could'⁷. Te Huia abducts five-year-old Rona Stewart, the daughter of a settler, and takes her away to his secret pa in the hills.

Twelve years later, Rona's younger brothers, Bryan and Pat, following the rather cryptic directions given to them by a dying tohunga, set out to find the pa and their long-lost sister. When they reach the pa, after many adventures, they meet the beautiful and imperious Princess Rata, who believes herself to be Te Huia's daughter, but is in fact their sister Rona. After some soul-searching, Rata/Rona decides to return to her real family, and the three young Stewarts escape through the bush, hotly pursued by Te Huia and his warriors. They eventually reach home, and Te Huia, moved by seeing the reunited family sitting around the fireside singing 'Home, Sweet Home', abandons his plans to reclaim his adopted daughter and returns to his pa alone. Peacocke may have based her plot on the discovery in 1926, a few years before *The Runaway Princess* was published, of Caroline Perrett, who had been abducted by a group of Maori from her Taranaki home as an eight-year-old in 1864 and had spent her life believing herself to be Maori. Unlike Rona, however, Caroline had become completely acculturated and chose not to return to Pakeha society.⁸

The plot of *The Runaway Princess* is full of melodramatic elements – kidnapping, a death-bed confession, a secret mountain hide-out, a lost relative whose identity is proved by a distinguishing mark, pursuits, narrow escapes, and a sentimental ending. It does not attempt to convey any real sense of what pioneering life was like; in fact, the process of settlement is dismissed in a few sentences:

Twelve years saw great changes in Weka Valley. Where the rough little log cabins of the settlers had stood were now trim farm houses surrounded by gardens and orchards. The Bush had been burned and felled all along the valley, and down on the river flats fat cattle grazed contentedly. There was even a tiny school-house on the hill-side.⁹

Peacocke mentions the hard work done by the settlers, but the Stewart family are seen only in their leisure moments, sitting around chatting, singing at the fireside, or, in the boys' case, swimming in the river. When the boys set out on their expedition, there is no suggestion that their labour on the farm will be missed. Most of the book is concerned with the boys' exciting adventures on their journeys to and from Te Huia's pa, and their reunion with their sister, rather than the humdrum life on the farm. Peacocke specialized in writing family stories, and her realistic portrayal of the family dynamics in *The Runaway Princess* balances the more melodramatic aspects of the book. The grieving mother with her obsessive desire to find her lost daughter

is a romantic figure, but the two boys, Bryan and Pat, are lively characters, and the relationship between them, and later with their sister, is credible and often amusing. No doubt Peacocke was drawing on memories of her own childhood and her experiences as the first teacher of Dilworth School, an Auckland school for boys from disadvantaged home backgrounds.

Canterbury society of the late nineteenth century, as described by Theodore and Winifred Harper in *Windy Island* (1934), was far more civilized than that of the bush settlements of *The Runaway Princess*; or indeed, that depicted in most of the other books in this chapter. The majority of the historical novels set during the colonial period deal with working-class families trying to make a living by the sweat of their brow, but *Windy Island* harks back to the early settler novels, in that the protagonists belong to the affluent upper middle class. Bobby's father, John Cornish, the son of a baronet, is 'a banker and a man of substance',¹⁰ and he has built on his farm near Christchurch a large home (named Bridewell after the family home in England), which is furnished with English antiques and staffed by a large number of servants, thus ensuring that 'the manor-house tradition [was] securely rooted in colonial soil'.¹¹ The Cornish children are taught at home by a governess and constantly reminded of their English heritage.

One of Bobby's childhood dreams is to cross the Canterbury Plains and explore the mountains he can see from his home, and the plot of *Windy Island* revolves around the way this ambition is fulfilled. The book is divided into three parts, each of which is in effect a different genre – a family story, a boarding school tale, and a young adult adventure. Part I describes Bobby's life at home and his meeting with three people who will play an important role in his future – the old Scottish shepherd, Jock Munro; the sheep stealer, Jim Buchanan; and his sister's friend, Ann, who shares his love of the mountains. In Part II Bobby spends several years at school at French Farm on Banks Peninsula, where he has problems with the school bully, and has a number of adventures such as helping to rescue sailors from a sinking ship, and discovering a smuggling ring. In Part III, Bob, by now eighteen and finished with school, persuades his father to let him work as a musterer for a few years before going to Oxford. The hard work of mustering and shearing, and the loneliness and

hardship of boundary-keeping during winter, are enlivened by the company of Jock Munro, and an Englishman, Johnny, whose tales of his home in underprivileged Houndsditch give Bob a different view of England from that of his parents. Bob also takes part in an expedition into the McKenzie Country in pursuit of the sheep rustler McKenzie, who is in fact his old acquaintance, Jim Buchanan. Unlike the real McKenzie, who was imprisoned and subsequently deported (as de Roo describes in *Traveller*), Buchanan is allowed to escape. A romantic attachment between Bob and Ann is another 'young adult' feature of this part of the book. *Windy Island* ends with Bob ready to leave for Oxford, though with the intention of becoming a bridge-builder rather than a lawyer.

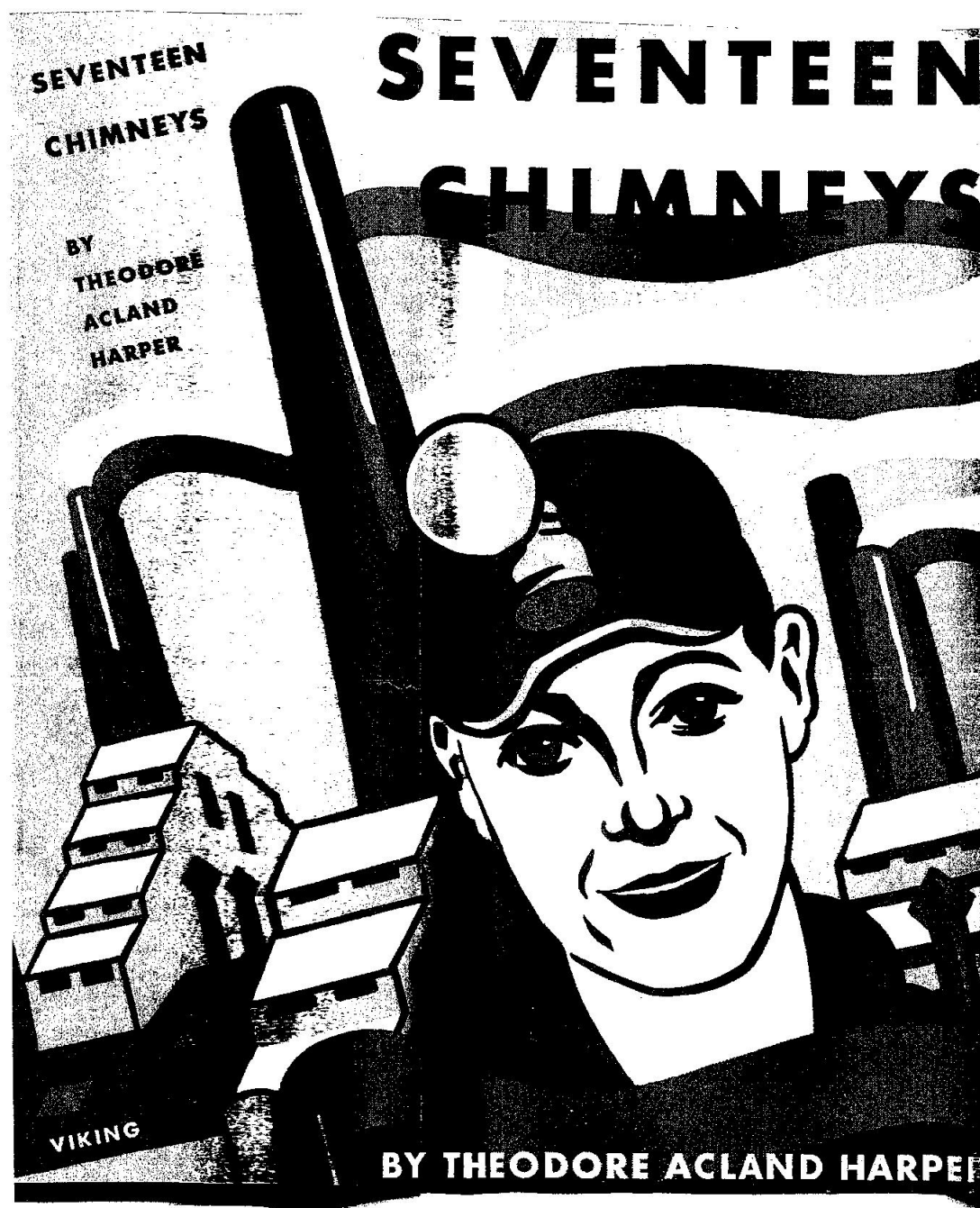
Windy Island provides a picture of nineteenth century society that encompasses both the privileged lifestyle of the well-off settlers, and the lives of working men. It appears to be a fairly authentic picture, although the Foreword disclaims any pretensions to accuracy:

In attempting this picture of the early days of New Zealand I have exercised the story-teller's privilege to the full. Where necessary, dates have been telescoped, places renamed, rivers and mountains pushed a little this way or that! The McKenzie Country is actually on the map; and historical incidents have been brushed in as atmosphere.¹²

No actual dates are given, but references to the discovery of gold on the West Coast suggest that the first part of the book is set in 1865; therefore Bobby's mustering experiences would take place in 1871. The dates have clearly been 'telescoped'; for McKenzie's exploits actually occurred in 1855, and the slump which defers Bob's trip to England appears to be that of the late 1870s and 1880s. Without an intimate knowledge of the Canterbury high country, it is less easy to discern where the authors have pushed geographical features 'this way or that'. The descriptions of the Banks Peninsula and high country landscape appear to be drawn from personal observation (and also from material supplied by Theodore Harper's relative, the mountaineer Arthur Harper, to whom the book is dedicated), and the writers seem to share Bobby's almost spiritual feeling for his beloved plains and mountains. One oddity is the renaming of Christchurch as Wairoa, as no other local place names are changed, and the map of New Zealand on page eight gives both names. Although the focus of

the characters in the book is firmly on England, the Glossary is intended for readers in the United States, where most of the Harpers' books were published; for example, toi-toi is likened to pampas grass, and the Maori is 'a New Zealand native. Akin to the Hawaiian'.¹³

The plot of *Windy Island* is action-packed, but as well there is strong character development, and passages of reflection, particularly on the relationship of New Zealanders with England. This theme is also important in *Seventeen Chimneys*, which continues Bob and Ann's story into adulthood. Bob's father's bank goes bankrupt, and there are rumours that Mr Cornish used other people's money for his own purposes. Mr Cornish and the rest of the family leave for England, but Bob, who had intended to go to England to study engineering, can no longer afford to do so. Instead he works for a year in the Marlborough Sounds to earn money, then goes to Thames to study at the School of Mines, as this is the only form of engineering he can afford. He works in a mine to support himself and has a brief relationship with the daughter of the mine owner. Once he graduates, he goes back to Wairoa to say goodbye to his old friends, the parson and Ann, then works his passage on a ship to the United States. After a dramatic trip involving a tornado and a mutiny, Bob becomes an engineer at a mine in Arizona, in a harsh landscape very different from his New Zealand home. At the end of *Windy Island* it was implied that Bob would marry Ann, but her father sees the bankruptcy as putting Bob 'outside the gate',¹⁴ and he is no longer an acceptable suitor. *Seventeen Chimneys* ends with Ann about to leave for England, and the parson speculating that both Bob and Ann will return to New Zealand, but probably not together. *Windy Island* was written by Theodore and Winifred Harper, but *Seventeen Chimneys* is by Theodore alone, and it is more of a 'boys' book', with more emphasis on the details of Bob's work and less on his personal relationships. These differences are exemplified by the book jackets; while *Windy Island* has a softly-coloured picture of Bob and his pony with a backdrop of mountains, *Seventeen Chimneys* is a bold black and orange illustration of a hard-hatted miner with a backdrop of factory chimneys.



Dust jacket of *Seventeen Chimneys* by Theodore Acland Harper (illustrator not acknowledged).

Eileen Soper's *Young Jane* (1955), another of the small number of books in this chapter with a South Island setting, is set in Otago in the 1860s on an inland sheep station. Soper was a journalist and the author of *The Otago of Our Mothers*, a centennial history of Otago based on the diaries, letters and reminiscences of early settlers. *Young Jane*, Soper's only historical novel, draws on this material, and also on the history of Soper's own family. The historical setting is therefore authentic, but

it is not obtrusive and serves mainly as a backdrop to a simple and believable story about the friendship of three children. Nine-year-old Jane lives with her grandparents, aunts and uncle, after the death by drowning of both her parents and one of her uncles when she was a baby. Jane's grandmother tells her vivid stories about the family's pioneering days only fifteen years previously – the eventful voyage and the joy of landing in New Zealand; the long trek inland with a bullock dray and tents; and the building of a cob cottage. By the 1860s the pioneering stage is over for Jane's family, and the cob cottage has been replaced by 'the house with its eaves and gables and chimneys, its orchard on one side and its croquet lawn on the other',¹⁵ and an English garden with roses, hollyhocks, lavender, and box hedges. As Cousin Caroline, newly arrived from Home, remarks, "I imagined I was coming to the ends of the earth, but you live here just as we live in England."¹⁶

Jane's new friends Rusty and Tilda, on the other hand, who came out on the same ship as Cousin Caroline, still have to establish themselves in their new country. Their father goes to the gold-diggings, and the children and their mother live in a tent by the river. The family's arrival is the catalyst for the events of the story, as for the first time Jane has children to play with. Rusty, Tilda and Jane immediately become fast friends and, together with Tilda's pet piglet Porcus and Jane's kitten Muffin, they embark on a series of mild adventures: building a hut on an island in the river; meeting an old hermit, Mr Matthew; panning for gold; nearly getting caught by a flood; and finding a hatbox which contains Aunt Eliza's wedding dress, lost when her bridegroom and Jane's parents drowned nine years previously. There is a happy ending when Rusty and Tilda's father returns from the gold-diggings and decides to settle on the farm, so the three children will not have to be parted.

While the children are having their adventures, the work of the farm and household goes on in the background – shearing, milking the house cows, cooking, preserving, washing, sewing and gardening. *Young Jane* is told from the point of view of a nine-year-old girl and reflects her narrow circle of interests; the wider historical issues of the time do not feature as they do not impinge upon her daily life. The Otago gold rush which was in full spate in the 1860s is mentioned, but only because Rusty and Tilda's father has gone to the diggings. The book gains its period flavour from such

things as descriptions of the aunts' clothes, and a detailed inventory of the furniture and ornaments in Jane's bedroom, right down to the titles of the books in her bookcase. The verses which precede each chapter and the delicate illustrations by Evelyn Clouston also contribute to the old-fashioned feeling of the book.



Illustration by Evelyn Clouston for *Young Jane* by Eileen Soper, p.124.

The appealing picture Soper paints of the busy but happy life on an isolated sheep station is replicated in many later books, such as Joyce West's *Drovers Road* series, not to mention numerous adult romances, notably those of Mary Scott and Essie Summers.

Cecil and Celia Manson's *The Adventures of Johnny van Bart*, discussed in Chapter Three, is a highly implausible story about a young English boy who becomes a Maori chief. Elsie Locke comments that, 'The Mansons are weak on Maoritanga but strong on settlers';¹⁷ and certainly their only other historical novel, *The Lonely One* (1963), which is set in the Wairarapa district during the 1860s, has a rather more credible plot. Orphaned Bill, rejected by his foster family in Wellington, gains employment as an assistant ferryman on a river in the Wairarapa, but is dismissed because of the animosity of local farmer's son, Harry Naseby, who is jealous of Bill's superior ability with horses. Fortunately Bill has a number of loyal supporters, including Ike, the highly respected driver of the Wairarapa coach, Rangi, a local Maori chief, and Harry's pretty young sister Lindy. Bill is employed as a stable-hand by the Meads, who are the largest landowners in the district, and proves his worth by taming an

unrideable thoroughbred for them. After several years, he takes on a mail contract delivering mail to isolated settlements, riding Pouaru, the Lonely One, a wild stallion belonging to his friend Rangi (who, rather confusingly, is also known as Pouaru or the Lonely One). Bill makes a success of the mail run, but Harry Naseby, by now the local postmaster, still dislikes him, and sends him out to deliver the mail during a flood. When Bill is nearly drowned, Harry repents and confesses his wrongdoings. The story ends with Harry leaving for the Australian goldfields, after arranging for Bill to take his place at his parents' home. It seems a rather unlikely contrivance, as Mrs Naseby has always strongly disapproved of Bill: "“I wouldn't like an unkempt, uneducated ragamuffin like Bill to mix with our children.””¹⁸ However, it presumably sanctions the romance between Bill and Lindy, which had hitherto been impossible because of the differences in their social status.

One of the noteworthy features of *The Lonely One* is the emphasis given to an important aspect of colonial life - the difficulties of travel and communication in the time before good roads, railways and telephones. Bill's special gift with horses is significant in a society which relied on horses as the chief means of transport. Coach drivers are regarded as 'popular heroes',¹⁹ and two chapters are devoted to a description of a hair-raising coach trip over the Rimutakas. One of the passengers is the Jewish pedlar, Benny the Pack, one of the rare Jewish characters encountered in New Zealand historical fiction for children:²⁰

“He goes around most of the farms in the Hutt Valley and all the wayback stations in the Wydrup [Wairarapa]. People always like to see him coming. He brings news from one place to the next and he's good with healing herbs. And of course the ladies are glad to see the pretty silks and gewgaws and things he has for sale in that old pack of his.”²¹

In the absence of bridges, ferries were another important form of transport, and ferryman like George and Bill were employed to take passengers across rivers. The dangers of fording rivers are constantly stressed; there are frequent references to death by drowning as 'the Wairarapa death', and this message is reinforced by Bill's narrow escape in the flooded river. The book also shows the impact of the regular mail run on remote backblocks farms which were formerly completely isolated. The

warm welcome Bill receives from ‘every distant farm in this lonely bush and hill country’²² makes him realize the value of contact with the outside world.

By the 1890s the advent of railways and telegrams had made many rural communities a little less isolated, though the little bush village of Paka Puki described by Frank Livingstone Combs in *Ben* (1966) is still very much a pioneering settlement.²³ The book consists of a series of semi-autobiographical sketches, first published in the *School Journal* in 1950, and set in the Ninety Mile Bush area of Hawkes Bay during the 1890s. People make their living felling the bush, cutting railway sleepers and fence posts, and running stock among the stumps of the burnt-off bush. Times are hard because of low wool prices, and, as in the depression of the 1930s, many men, among them Ben’s father, are ‘on the tramp’, looking for work.

He had had a dozen jobs while he had been away – fencing, draining, bush-carpentering, rabbiting, and serving a month in a store. He had carried his swag while looking for work and had sometimes walked “with the bluey up” thirty miles in a single day.²⁴

While the adults worry about making ends meet, and rely on the good nature of Mr Bean the store-keeper to allow them credit for essential groceries, the children are largely unaffected. When Ben’s father sends a telegram to say that he has found a job, his mother is overcome:

“Min, it’s from George and he’s got a job, a permanent one, and he’ll be home on Thursday. At last it seems as if things are going to look up and our troubles are over.” There were tears in her eyes, and stranger still, in Aunt Min’s, too.
“Why?” wondered Ben. He didn’t know of any troubles except that he would be tanned for sure if he was late again for school tomorrow.²⁵

Young Ben and Alfie are more concerned with their day-to-day activities, such as helping around the house and farm, going to school, or rafting or fishing in the creek. The book has no plot as such, and consists of loosely linked episodes which deal mainly with the minutiae of everyday life, but also relate exciting events – catching a monster eel in the creek, a visit from the school inspector, a train trip, and a controlled bush burn-off which gets out of hand and burns down the Harpers’ whare. Combs based these stories on his own childhood experiences, and *Ben* gives a lively and presumably realistic account of pioneering life in the latter part of the nineteenth century.

Another apparently authentic view of life in the bush in the 1890s is given by Ruth Dallas in four books – *The Children in the Bush* (1969), *The Wild Boy in the Bush* (1971), *The Big Flood in the Bush* (1972) and *Holiday Time in the Bush* (1983) – based on stories told by her mother about her childhood in the sawmilling settlement of Longbush near Invercargill. Her widowed mother (Dallas's grandmother) was the local nurse, and was often away from home, leaving her four children to look after themselves. The books are all set in 1891, when the eldest child, Sophie, is thirteen. She has already left school, and she keeps house and looks after the younger children when their mother is away. She makes sure that the hens are fed, the cow is milked, and the meals are cooked, and that her younger siblings go to school and Sunday school. However, once the work is done, she is not too old to join in their exploits, such as going blackberrying in the bush, climbing on the roof of the house, and exploring the creek in a home-made boat.

The stories are narrated by the youngest child, eight-year-old Jean, and faithfully reflect the perspective of a little girl. For example, when the children discover a cave in the bush, her brother Robbie is excited by the moa bones he finds there, but Jean and her nine-year-old sister Helen are more interested in playing house; and the flood which swamps many of the houses in the settlement is memorable for the evacuated family who come and stay, the games the children play, the food they eat, and the fact that the girls' bed collapses with the extra children sleeping in it. The books feature the plot device of the absent parent, which is often used in children's fiction to allow the child protagonists to engage in exciting (and generally highly improbable) adventures, but the incidents Dallas describes are all quite plausible. The children find an injured man in the bush, but rather than rescuing him on their own they fetch adult assistance. When they meet a 'wild boy' living in a cave, it is their mother who persuades him to return to normal life. A great deal of their time is spent simply doing the necessary chores or going to school.

The *Bush* books were written for the Methuen 'Read Aloud' series, so they are intended for young readers; the chapters are short and the vocabulary is simple, compared with Dallas's books for older readers such as *Shining Rivers*. However, the

simplicity of the structure and language does not detract from the stories, as Fitzgibbon points out: ‘Though written for the confident young reader, there is such a rich, detailed picture of the life of a pioneering family with its warmth and good humour that a reader of any age would find these novels valuable.’²⁶

Unlike Combs’ and Dallas’s tales, Elizabeth Muriel Ellin’s *The Children of Clearwater Bay* (1969) and *The Greenstone Axe* (1975) have no basis in fact, and are straightforward adventure stories with an historical setting. They have a similar plot structure to the *Bush* stories, in that the parents are disposed of in the first chapter, leaving the children free to have adventures without adult intervention, with the return of the parents at the end of the book signalling the safe conclusion of the adventures and a return to normality. In *The Children of Clearwater Bay*, the six Cameron children – Nick (thirteen), Molly (twelve), Bart (ten), Sally (seven) and the two-year-old twins Paul and David – live with their parents on an isolated farm. Their father is injured by a falling tree, so when a friendly Maori woman comes to warn the family of an impending attack by the local Katui tribe, their mother stays behind to look after him while the children are sent to safety in the nearby settlement of Te Rawai. However, Te Rawai has already been over-run by hostile Maori, and the children decide to return home. Their boat strikes a rock so the trip is made on foot, a four-day journey around the coast, carrying the twins and foraging for food. They arrive at Clearwater Bay to find the house deserted, and after a few days at home, they set out to walk to the whaling station further up the coast. This time they take their horse to carry the twins and a goat to supply milk, but the journey is still eventful – Bart has to be rescued from a sheer cliff, and Nick is captured by a Maori. The children are eventually picked up by a coastal trading ship and reunited with their parents.

Ellin gives no clear indication of either the geographical or historical setting of the action. The Katui are a fictitious iwi, and their campaign against the settlers, and the outbreak of inter-tribal warfare which brings it to a rapid conclusion, bear no resemblance to any actual events. *The Children of Clearwater Bay* tells an exciting story, but the historical aspects appear to have no basis in reality, and there is no real sense of the past; as Locke observes, ‘The children talk and act like moderns among

their pioneer transport and gadgets. [...] As a tale it has its points but the ‘history’ is spurious.²⁷ The narrative is focalized mainly by Nick and occasionally his younger brother Bart, who takes the credit for the children’s survival. However, it is Molly who has the most onerous task, caring for the twins and trying to keep her siblings fed, clean and healthy.

The Greenstone Axe also has a family of young children looking after themselves in their parents’ absence. In this case, the children – fourteen-year-old Nan, thirteen-year-old Tim and nine-year-old Bern – are left alone on their remote farm in Northland for a few weeks while their parents travel to Russell to buy stores. The illustrations show the children as considerably younger (and rather oddly dressed).



Frontispiece by Elizabeth Sutherland for *The Greenstone Axe* by E. M. Ellin.

Most of the children’s exploits are quite feasible in the circumstances; they include an expedition into the bush to find honey, the capture of a wild calf, a search for a neighbour missing in the bush, and tending an injured Maori child. There are also

more dramatic adventures – the children discover a greenstone axe, the lost treasure of the local Nga Tipuhi tribe (another fictitious iwi), and Tim overhears a rival Maori tribe plotting a raid on the Nga Tipuhi pa and warns them in time to repulse the attack. This is historically inaccurate, as inter-tribal warfare of this type was over by the 1850s when this story is set, and the author's statement that few Maori owned guns and that fighting was a hand-to-hand affair is also incorrect. However, the author gives events a feeling of verisimilitude by fitting them in around the children's day-to-day activities of looking after the livestock, house and garden in their parents' absence. *The Greenstone Axe* stresses the hard work required by the pioneers to survive on their isolated farms, where contact with the outside world was infrequent and families had to be self-sufficient.

No Trains at the Bay (1976) by Anne Jacqueline Holden is, like Ellin's books, an adventure story with no pretensions to historical accuracy; the blurb describes it as 'a blood-and-thunder adventure story in the fine old tradition', featuring 'an incredible sequence of dangerous exploits'.²⁸ The exploits of the two young protagonists, the narrator Nick, recently arrived from England, and his friend Frankie, certainly are incredible. In the space of a few weeks they are blown out to sea off the coast of Northland during a storm; land on an island where they find a shipwreck and a dead body; are rescued by a trader who drops them off in Coromandel; find gold in a nearby creek; get lost in the bush; and are kidnapped by a villain (known simply as 'The Man'). The boys escape during an earthquake; run into the bush and shelter in a cave, and are captured by a Maori war party who plan to kill them because the cave is tapu. While they are held captive in the Maori pa a volcano erupts and the boys are buried in mud, from which they are rescued several days later by British soldiers who arrest them on suspicion of treason. They are taken to prison in Auckland; but escape when the soldiers march off to the Waikato war; only to be recaptured by The Man, who forces them to sail to the island, where he threatens to throw Nick over a cliff, but instead falls off himself and is killed. Nick's father finds them and takes them home, but the story does not end, as expected, with the boys settling down happily on the farm. Frankie runs away again to retrieve the gold he had found near Coromandel, and his father refuses to follow him and bring him back.

He said, “Frankie is nearly fourteen. He’s old enough to make his own way in the world. Let him go.” [...]

Whether he ever found gold or not I don’t know, because none of us has seen Frankie since.²⁹

These are the last words of the book, so instead of a sense of closure, the reader is left speculating as to what unpleasant fate might have befallen the thirteen-year-old runaway. The disappearance of one of the main characters is an unsettling and uncharacteristic ending for a children’s book.

Like Syme in *Gipsy Michael*, Holden refers to real historic events with scant regard for chronology – the death of Volkner (1865) is immediately followed by the Tarawera eruption (1886), and then by the Waikato war (1864). Any claim to historical credibility is further diluted by the ‘blood and thunder’ elements of the plot – shipwreck, piracy, kidnapping, false imprisonment, and narrow escapes – and the implausible characters, such as the mysterious castaway, the eccentric Irish hermit and the choleric English army officer. The picaresque nature of the plot militates against any character development, even that of the two protagonists.

In contrast to Holden, Anne de Roo bases her historical fiction on considerable research and familiarity with the area in which her books are set. *Traveller* and *Jacky Nobody*, both discussed in previous chapters, were set during the 1850s in Canterbury and in the Bay of Islands respectively, while *Because of Rosie* takes place in the Manawatu in 1872. Four orphaned children, ranging in age from twelve-year-old Sam to seventeen-year-old Will, run away from their unpleasant uncle in Wellington planning to live with their Aunt Kate and her new husband near Palmerston North. After an adventurous trek on foot, accompanied by their cow Rosie, they arrive at their aunt’s house – a primitive hut in a bush clearing – to find it unoccupied. The children manage to survive on their own for many months, thanks to the generosity of the Maori from the neighbouring village and occasional rather grudging aid from their other neighbour, the reclusive Mr Stonecroft. The book ends with the return of Aunt Kate, but by then the children have demonstrated their ability to fend for themselves; they have not merely survived the winter on their own, they have also broken in more land, and built a new house with the help of Nils, a Norwegian timber miller whom they rescued from the bush.

De Roo stresses the hard work involved in felling trees, growing and preparing food, and trying to stay warm, dry and fed in difficult conditions:

The season of mosquitoes had given way to the season of mud.

It brought hard times as they had known it must. Only Ellen and Sarah Jane had boots and the mud oozed through cracks and holes in them. Bare feet, blue with cold and reddened with chilblains, paddled through the mud when it was fine enough for outdoor work. And so much work was still outdoors. Baking still had to be done in the clay oven, clothes washed in the creek, firewood chopped, Rosie milked and comforted in her outdoor misery.

For all Ellen's washing, clothes were never clean; for all her darning and patching, they were never whole. [...] Her stock of medicines was dwindling and so were their food supplies. Tea and sugar became a distant memory, wheat and potatoes disappeared with alarming speed and some of their stock must be kept for seed or next winter would be even hungrier. Rosie, excellent milker though she was, could not be expected to yield milk all year round; early in winter she went dry.³⁰

The children survive only through the support of the local Maori; and in return Ellen nurses them when they are ill and provides them with medicines, which she makes herself from her aunt's recipes.

While *Because of Rosie* is set in a particular place and time, Margaret Beames does not specify either date or location in *Hidden Valley* (1983). However, it appears to be set during the late 1800s – transport is by sailing ship, horse and cart, or on horseback; and Vicky and her friend Carrie wear long skirts which hamper their activities and are constantly being torn and having to be mended. The story is a fairly simple one about the friendship between farmer's children, Vicky and Johnny Bell, and Carrie, the daughter of Mr Lindsay, a wealthy ship owner and importer. One of Lindsay's ships is wrecked near the shore, and the pedigree bull he was importing for a customer escapes into the bush. The children find the bull in a little valley but keep it secret. Meanwhile there are various adventures, such as wild pigs invading the orchard, a fire which nearly burns down the barn, an outbreak of measles which closes the school, and an unwelcome visit from an elderly aunt. The story ends happily with the departure of both the unwelcome guest and Carrie's unpopular governess, the recovery of the bull, the safe arrival of Lindsay's other ship which was thought to be lost at sea, and the discovery of gold in the creek. More importantly for the children, Carrie is allowed to attend the local school.

Fitzgibbon notes that ‘Margaret Beames’ strength lies in her ability to tell interesting and fast-moving stories with colourful characters, rather than in plot construction or in the creation of depth of background.’³¹ The individual episodes which make up the story in *Hidden Valley* do not really add up to a coherent plot, as the central premise which underlies them – the children’s decision to keep the whereabouts of the bull secret – lacks credibility. There are few period details, other than the modes of transport and the girls’ clothing already mentioned, and there is no real sense that the story is set in the past; the plot, characters and dialogue could be transposed to a contemporary setting with little change.

The reverse is true of *Sergeant Sal* (1991) by Anne de Roo, which is a sequel to de Roo’s two books about the Northern War, *Jacky Nobody* and *The Bats’ Nest*, and features many of the same characters. Jacky Smith is now a guide and interpreter, while Noah Miggs and his father have a general store in New Plymouth. Noah sends for the younger brother of his friend Tim (the drummer boy of *The Bats’ Nest*) to help in the shop, but Tim’s sisters, thirteen-year-old Sal and nine-year-old Lizzie, arrive instead. Sal, for all her tender years, is capable and industrious; she immediately gains work as a maid on a farm, and spends her half-day off every week cleaning for Noah and his father. When she hears that Jacky is guiding an English artist, Mr Teesdale, through the bush to Koromarino on the east coast where her brother Tim lives, she disguises herself as a boy and follows, with the aid of a Maori girl, Ana, and with Noah in hot pursuit. Sal burns her leg in a hot pool, so the party camps at Rotomahana, by the Pink and White Terraces, where the water of the terrace pools heals her leg, and Mr Teesdale teaches her to paint. The book ends with everyone gathered at Koromarino, and a family reunion for Sal, Lizzie and Tim. Lizzie has been adopted by Mr Miggs and his new wife and is going to live in Auckland and attend school, but Sal, her adventures over, returns to her job in New Plymouth.

De Roo’s historical novels have been described in the *Cambridge Guide to Children’s Books in English* as:

a unique body of work, unmatched in capturing early and rural New Zealand life. Nineteenth-century settlers’ journeys, burning-off and breaking in the land, the coming of age of young men and women in a physically tough land, and the flattening of class barriers are the themes of these precisely constructed books.³²

Like de Roo's earlier books, previously discussed, *Sergeant Sal* effectively captures the life of nineteenth-century New Zealand, in this case both that of the fledgling settlement of New Plymouth, and the adventures and dangers of travelling through the bush. What distinguishes this book is the humour, which arises from the comical characters such as Mr Miggs and Mrs Binks, and from the idiosyncratic dialogue. Sal, lively, strong-minded and resourceful, is also a source of amusement, but in spite of her irrepressible high spirits and love of adventure, she has a serious and pragmatic side. She has no regrets about leaving her home and family in England: "Only got home on me half day off and then it was all rub and scrub helping Mam and our Hetty clean the house. And there ain't much to miss in working at the Manor House as kitchen maid from five in the morning till nine at night."³³ She is resigned to the fact that, in spite of her talent and the gift of painting equipment from Mr Teesdale, she will never have the leisure to be an artist.

Swag and Tucker (1993) by Margaret Hall is another of the few books about the colonial period with a South Island setting, and the only one of all the historical novels in this survey set in southern Westland. Swag and Tucker is a small and isolated community of families living in what was once a much larger gold-mining settlement established in 1865 on the coast north of Haast. Many of the buildings erected during the brief gold-rush are by 1887, the time of this story, empty and derelict, and only a handful of houses are still occupied. The men work on clearing land for farming or digging for gold when the tide deposits gold-bearing sand on the beach, while the women look after the housework and children. The families are mainly Irish Catholics with many children, and Mary Kendrick, the fifteen-year-old narrator of the story, not only helps her mother clean, cook and sew for a family of ten, but also teaches her younger siblings and several other local children. The story follows the cycle of a year with the changing seasons and the routines they bring; as well as highlights such as the occasional arrival of stores brought in by packhorse, visits from the school inspector, and a hawker bringing exciting goods to buy. There are more serious events as well; Mary's sister Bridie has to be taken ninety miles to the nearest doctor when she injures her leg, and one of the local boys drowns crossing

a flooded river. There is also a dramatic episode when armed robbers steal the family's hard-won gold.

Hall is clearly very familiar with the area in which her story is set, and she evokes the narrow coastal strip between the dense bush and turbulent Tasman Sea with precisely observed details of the bush, beaches and sand dunes, and birdlife:

Then gradually I registered new sounds until the forest and clearing seemed to vibrate with night life; grating arguments of some kakas, and nearer at hand the screech of a kiwi. From down where the tree-frogs whistled by the creek, a pukeko screamed.³⁴

The weather patterns which regulate the settlers' lives are vividly recorded:

After two weeks of unsettled weather and swollen rivers, the full moon came in, riding the cloud formations like a ship at sea. Once again the weather deteriorated and the wind had gathered strength so that by noon the next day it had reached gale force.³⁵

As well as creating a strong sense of place, Hall establishes a sense of period by similar use of details. These arise naturally from the story, as in the description of the family washday:

Mother roused us at daylight on the following Saturday because there were sure signs of a southerly coming, and there's no wind better than a southerly for drying washing. While I was still brushing Little One's hair, Brendan was already carrying buckets of water from the rain barrels to the copper tub in the wash-room [...] where Ged was yawning at the hearth, watching the flames creeping through the kindling under the tub. [...]

The iron bathtub was put in the yard and Bridie and Whistle held onto each other's shoulders and squelched up and down on the blankets in the warm water, turning the folds with their feet and trying to splash each other as soon as Mother disappeared.³⁶

Hall conveys the hard work of washday, and also the fact that the whole family is involved, and that, for the younger ones at least, it can be fun. She is very good at evoking family relationships; such as the special bond between Mary and her younger brother Brendan, and the tension between Sean, the oldest son, who is craving independence, and his father. Mary herself is a well-drawn character, who at fifteen has adult responsibilities and is looking forward to marriage with Nik, the son of the neighbouring Kozan family. Hall has created a sympathetic and seemingly realistic picture of pioneer family and community life in a well-defined time and place. It is

clear from the acknowledgements and Author's Note that this realism is based on extensive research and incorporates the experiences of actual people.³⁷

Like *Swag and Tucker*, *The Tides of Time* (1996) by Zana Bell is set in the 1880s, and has as a protagonist a young girl living on a farm in a remote area, but the two books have little else in common. *The Tides of Time* is a time-slip narrative, in which fourteen-year-old Jaz, sulking about having to go and live in Northland with her mother and her mother's new partner, is transported back to the 1880s by a blow to the head. She is taken in by Martha, a girl of her own age, and learns about nineteenth century life by helping Martha on the farm, and by discussions in which the two girls compare such things as body image, clothes, school, career opportunities, work, leisure activities, and family relationships. Differences are painstakingly spelled out:

Thinking back, Jaz realised that she spent an awful lot of time lying about, listening to her Walkman, chatting to friends or watching TV.

"I thought girls were supposed to just sit around looking pretty, drinking tea and sewing," she grumbled.

"Ah yes, well you do get those sort of course," admitted Martha. "Rich folk have servants to do everything for them so the ladies have soft, white hands and never mess their clothes or hair. But people like you and me, we've got to work our way through this world. Most women around here, especially the old ones, are as tough as old boots. Carving out a living in a new land takes a lot of work. Women help their menfolk as much as possible – with the clearing of the land and farming, not to mention doing all the ordinary household chores."³⁸

Eventually Jaz returns to her own time, with a greater appreciation of its advantages and a more positive attitude to life, and Martha is inspired by Jaz's tales of the future to become a suffragette and a doctor.

Whereas *Swag and Tucker* has a feeling of actuality as if drawn from first-hand experience, *The Tides of Time* does not have the same sense of period, possibly because the viewpoint remains that of a twentieth century teenager. While the story is entertaining, the treatment of the past is fairly superficial and neither the characters nor the setting (of either the historical or contemporary story) is particularly convincing. This could be attributable to the fact that the author is not overly concerned with authenticity, as she states in the Author's Note: 'I couldn't resist

including some real events, although sometimes I twiddled with dates and details to make them fit into the story.’³⁹

Fleur Beale’s *A Respectable Girl* (2006) inverts the immigration paradigm of the books discussed in Chapters Four and Five by reversing the journey made by the protagonists. Rather than leaving England to make new lives for themselves in the colonies, New Zealand-born Hannah and her brother Jamie travel to England, where they experience just as many difficulties in adjusting to English society as the settlers do in coping with life in New Zealand. As indicated in the chapter on the New Zealand Wars, just over half of the book is set in New Plymouth in 1859-60, the period leading up to Taranaki War, and Beale creates a credible picture of colonial life during this time. Twenty years after its establishment, New Plymouth is a ‘little raggle-taggle town’⁴⁰ of wooden houses, most with their own flower and vegetable gardens, orchards, and paddocks for the cows. The streets are dusty in summer and ankle-deep in mud in winter, but there are shops selling goods from England (Hannah is for a time a shop-girl in a draper’s shop), and regular entertainments for the townspeople, including concerts, picnics, and even balls. Beale also describes the unrelenting toil of the settlers who try to carve out farms in the surrounding countryside, in particular, the women struggling to create homes in primitive conditions, often burdened with large families.

Hannah’s life is far from privileged; her foster-father never works and squanders the quarterly allowance he is sent by his family in England on drink, so there is little money in the household, even for essentials like clothes and boots. Hannah helps her foster mother in the house and garden, and she and her brothers go out and work, even though it is not considered respectable for a young lady to be in paid employment. In spite of the comparative hardship of her life in New Zealand, however, Hannah prefers it to her new life in England as the daughter of a nobleman, living in a stately home and waited on by servants, and she plans to return to New Plymouth. Unlike the earlier immigrant novels, where for many the longed-for happy ending was a return to England, for Hannah it is the prospect of returning to her home in New Zealand. Her brother Jamie, however, intends to remain in England to further his engineering career.

The three most recent historical novels set during the colonial period are all part of the 'My Story' series, and use the form of fictional diaries to record eventful years in the lives of their thirteen or fourteen year old protagonists. *Escape from Sarau: The Diary of Emilie Ritter, Nelson District, 1882-83* (2006) by Leone Morris-Bensemann is set in the German settlement of Sarau (now Upper Moutere) near Nelson. Although the first migrants had arrived from Germany as early as 1843, they retained their language and customs and their Lutheran religion, and formed a distinctive and self-contained community. The author is a descendant of the Sarau settlers and has drawn on family history, including a diary kept by a young relative during the 1880s, to provide authentic details of daily life. The story is told by Emilie, the daughter of Sarau's Lutheran minister, a harsh disciplinarian who frequently beats his children, especially Emilie. Emilie wants to get away from Sarau, but her plan to become a teacher at the Lutheran mission station at Waitotara near Wanganui, ends in failure, as her unannounced arrival causes consternation and she is promptly sent home. She finally achieves her goal by becoming engaged at the age of fifteen to a handsome young missionary, who arranges for her to spend a year in Wellington as a music teacher before they marry.

Since *Escape from Sarau* is a first person narrative, it inevitably concentrates on Emilie's emotions, especially her longing to leave and her relationship with the young missionary, Ludwig. However, it also documents family events, such as the death of Emilie's favourite brother from typhoid, and the birth of her older sister's baby. Much of the interest of the book lies in the setting, and the way Morris-Bensemann recreates the society of Sarau by incorporating details of the German culture retained by the settlers, including religious observances, games, food, and the consumption of kaffee und kuchen rather than tea and scones. A Glossary of German words and recipes for a few of the German dishes mentioned in the book reinforce this aspect of the book

Amy, the young narrator of Janine McVeagh's *Be Counted! The Diary of Amy Phelps, Dunedin, 1893* (2007), is sent from her Central Otago home to live with her wealthy, childless aunt and uncle in Dunedin so that she can attend Otago Girls High

School. Her diary recounts her school life and her ambition to become an artist, as well as family events, such as the accidental death of her father. The principal concern of the story, however, is not so much Amy's personal life, as the campaign by New Zealand women to gain the right to vote; personified by Aunt Delia, who devotes most of her time and energy to the Women's Christian Temperance Union and Women's Franchise League. The story provides justification for both the Temperance Union's opposition to drink (Amy's father is a drunkard who does not support his family), and the Franchise League's efforts to improve the lot of women (Amy's friend Mary has to leave school to work in a factory, spends time in a home for wayward girls, and nearly dies of malnutrition and pneumonia). The initially reluctant Amy becomes involved in her aunt's activities, which culminate in the passage of the Electoral Act granting women's suffrage in September 1893. *Be Counted!* features a number of real people (listed in the 'Historical Note' at the end of the book), including women who were actually part of the suffrage movement and some of those opposed to women's franchise, notably an unflattering portrait of Dunedin politician, Henry Fish.

Poor Man's Gold: The Diary of Reuben Radcliffe, Northland, 1899-1900 (2008) by Kath Beattie harks back to the gold rush novels of Chapter Seven, in that it focuses on a young male protagonist who goes prospecting in order to recoup the family fortunes. In this case, however, it is kauri gum rather than gold that he is seeking. Thirteen-year-old Reuben and his family lose their home and livelihood when the general store they own in a small Northland settlement is repossessed by the bank. Reuben has to leave school, even though he is academically gifted and had planned to be a journalist. He and his father go further north to dig for gum, and when his father gets another job, Reuben continues gum-digging, initially with a group of Dalmatian diggers and later on his own. The work is difficult and unpleasant, but he finds enough gum to make a living. Tragedy strikes when his younger brother, Walter, who is helping him at the diggings, falls into a ditch and drowns. Eventually the remaining family members obtain good jobs and a new home running a boarding house, and the story ends with Reuben planning to return to study and contemplating a variety of possible careers.

Poor Man's Gold provides a detailed description of the gum-digging industry, and also offers a wealth of information about other aspects of life in New Zealand around the turn of the century. There are references to women's suffrage, the Boer War, and the introduction of the law instituting an eight hour working day; descriptions of the first New Zealand pictorial postage stamps and the first statue of Queen Victoria to be erected in New Zealand; and details of coastal shipping and of the different nationalities living in New Zealand. Reuben becomes friendly with the Dalmatian gum-diggers who have come to New Zealand because of problems in their own country, and gains an insight into their culture. Polish, Jewish and Greek characters also make an appearance, though only in very minor roles.

Most of the historical novels about the colonial period make a genuine attempt to convey what life was like for the colonists in the nineteenth century. They stress the often primitive living conditions, and the physical labour required for survival, even by the youngest family members. In a few of them, such as Peacocke's *The Runaway Princess* and Holden's *No Trains at the Bay*, the characters engage in exciting and implausible adventures, but the majority deal with events which arise from everyday life. Even the Tarawera eruption, the most dramatic occurrence of the period, is shown through its impact on individuals and families. The destruction of the famous Pink and White Terraces (whose beauty is extolled in the first New Zealand historical novel for children, *Distant Homes*), the drama of the eruption, and the ordeal of those trapped under the rain of mud, make the Tarawera disaster an exciting topic for works of fiction. In *No Trains at the Bay*, one of the many adventures of the two young protagonists is being buried in mud after a volcanic eruption, and Sal, visiting Rotomahana in 1850 in *Sergeant Sal*, has a premonition about Tarawera and paints a picture of the mountain erupting.

The 1886 eruption is the main focus in four historical novels for children. *Doing and Daring* by Eleanor Stredder is the first of these, but although it was published in 1899, a mere thirteen years after the eruption, it gives the least accurate account of events. As noted in Chapter Four, the author, writing in England, had a cavalier approach to New Zealand geography; and she has taken equal liberties with the well-documented details of the eruption and its aftermath. When Tarawera erupts, the Lee

family are driven from their home on a Waikato farm by earthquakes and a rain of mud. Mr Lee goes to help other survivors, while the four children find refuge in a shepherd's hut on the west coast, and rescue the sailors from a ship wrecked in the storm created by the eruption. The oldest boy, Edwin, and his friend Whero return to the scene of the disaster; Edwin to find his father, and Whero to discover whether his family have survived. After numerous adventures, they find and rescue both Mr Lee, who has broken his leg, and Whero's family and other Maori who are sheltering in a whare almost buried under the mud. While the descriptions of the eruption and of the devastated countryside appear to have been taken from contemporary accounts, Stredder does not write about the well-documented experiences of the residents of Te Wairoa, preferring to write about fictitious rescues at invented locations. At times the story is historically misleading; for example, Whero declares that the Pakeha rescuers searched only for Pakeha survivors and ignored the plight of the Maori pa, and it is left to Edwin and Whero to find the whare where the Maori survivors are sheltering.

The eruption and its aftermath was clearly not sufficiently exciting for Stredder, and she adds various other melodramatic elements, such as the shipwreck, the discovery of a tapu Maori fortress complete with skulls and the skeleton of a moa, the theft of Mr Lee's and Nga-Hepé's money and its recovery by Edwin and Whero, and Whero's daring rescue of Edwin when Nga-Hepé, suspecting him of being the thief, tries to kill him. Even the rescuers are romanticized, and Stredder describes a gallant band of horsemen galloping through the night, flourishing their spades, and singing a rousing ballad, 'What lads e'er did, our lads will do'.⁴¹

The second book about the eruption, *Uncle Matt's Mountain* (1962) was written by Ruth Park, who, although a New Zealander, has spent much of her adult life in Australia; and the text makes it clear that the book is intended for Australian children.⁴² Young Matt, travelling from his Australian boarding school to join his family in New Zealand, meets an Aboriginal boy, Lukey, who looks after the horses of the new Governor. When Lukey is accidentally left behind in Auckland, Matt takes control:

Well, poor Lukey had no money, no clothes ... so what could I do? I said, "You break horses, Lukey? Chop wood? Look after girl piccaninny?"

Lukey gave a roar of delight. I don't think he much wanted to be the Governor's stable boy anyway.

"You come with me," I ordered.⁴³

The boys arrive in Te Wairoa, and start to row across Lake Tarawera to Matt's father's mill on the other side of the lake. The mountain erupts in spectacular fashion and the boat is nearly swamped, but the boys manage to return to Te Wairoa and rather unrealistically survive the rain of mud and rocks by sheltering under a tarpaulin on the hillside. The following day they set out to find Matt's family, a trip which takes four days on a makeshift raft. Matt's parents and sister are trapped in the remains of the mill under the mud, but Lukey and Matt contrive to dig them out. The Governor arrives to arrange aid for those affected by the eruption, and awards Matt and Lukey for their bravery. Lukey is given a job looking after the Governor's hunting dogs, and is 'the happiest man in New Zealand. He became quite famous for his big grin and his love of fancy clothes.'⁴⁴ The last few paragraphs relate that Matt's father rebuilds his mill and becomes prosperous, and that Matt goes to the Boer War, and on his return is given a 'soldier's acre' at Tarawera where he establishes a farm: 'By that time the earth had covered her wounds with a mantle of richest, choicest green, for volcanic ash is good for the soil in the long run. Once again the lakes lay blue and peaceful, and the old mountain seemed to drowse in the sunshine.'⁴⁵ Eventually both Matt and Lukey return to Australia, where Matt, as an old man, relates this story to his nieces and nephews.

Uncle Matt tells his listeners that the eruption occurred in June 1886, but his description of New Zealand is more like that of 1830s and 1840s than late 1880s:

Don't think New Zealand is made up of three cold, windy little islands that export frozen mutton. It's really a flock of little green isles sitting on the Pole's doorstep, and when I was young, sixty years ago, each of those islands was a port of adventure. When I think of all the fine ships crowding into the harbours, and the whalers, and sealers, and gold-miners, and bullockies, and flaxmillers, and timber-millers, why, I can almost smell the wind that was scented with sap, and burning forest, and gunpowder; for there were plenty of wild Maoris prowling around the bush, I can tell you!⁴⁶

The chronology is further confused by the statement that the events occurred ‘when I was young, sixty years ago’; yet *Uncle Matt’s Mountain* was published in 1962, and sixty years prior to that was 1902, not 1886. Nevertheless, the description of the actual eruption is reasonably close to the historical record, and includes details such as the sudden drop in the lake level preceding the eruption (though the mention of an old Maori woman who survived for a month in her buried home does not appear in historical accounts).

In *A Canoe in the Mist* (1984), Elsie Locke focalizes the story of the eruption through the fictional characters of two eleven-year-old girls: Lillian, the daughter of the housekeeper at the Te Wairoa Temperance Hotel, and Mattie, the child of English tourists. The fact that Mattie is a stranger provides a pretext for Lillian and other local residents to explain such things as Maori customs and volcanic geography. A trip to Rotomahana during which the phantom canoe is seen, and the eruption and its aftermath, are described from the perspective of two imaginative young girls. They see the Pink and White Terraces as a fairy staircase and themselves as fairy princesses; and when Guide Sophia arranges a bathe in one of the pools, the girls play at being statues and dancers. The terrifying and seemingly endless night of the eruption is also seen mainly from their viewpoint. Initially they shelter at the hotel, then, when it starts to collapse, they struggle through the rain of mud, rocks and fireballs to take refuge in Guide Sophia’s whare, knowing that many people have already died and that their own survival is uncertain. Although the thoughts and feelings Locke ascribes to them are fictitious, their experiences are based on real events and interwoven with those of actual people who were present. The book recreates the heroism of Guide Sophia and Mr McRae, proprietor of the Rotomahana Hotel, whose actions helped to save many lives; and conveys the tragedy of those who died, such as English tourist Edwin Bainbridge crushed in the collapse of the hotel, and the family of the local school master, Mr Haszard, most of whom died when their house was engulfed by mud.

A Canoe in the Mist gives a detailed, almost minute by minute, description of the eruption and of the following day when the survivors emerge to confront the devastation: ‘It was a different world she stood in, utterly unfamiliar, a weird and

lonely desert with no colour but grey.’⁴⁷ Like most of the buildings in Te Wairoa, Lillian’s home, the Temperance Hotel, has been completely destroyed: ‘It was like a cardboard house that a small child had pasted together, and a big bully had squashed it down and thrown bucketfuls of dirt over it.’⁴⁸ The last chapter of the book describes the tangi for the victims at Rotorua, which gives Lillian and Mattie a chance to come to terms with their experience before they go their separate ways. Mattie grieves for the destruction of the beautiful Pink and White Terraces, while Lillian is more concerned about the people who were killed and the plight of the survivors, particularly the Maori who have lost their ancestral land. Locke manages to end the book on a positive note. Guide Sophia tells the girls to be happy, for they have come through the catastrophe alive, and will share forever the memory of two things, ‘a night of terror and danger, and a day of great beauty.’⁴⁹

Shirley Corlett’s *Fire in the Sky* (2005) is part of the ‘My Story’ series, written in the form of the diary of fourteen-year-old James Collier, and describing his visit to Te Wairoa and his experience of the eruption and its aftermath. James’s father is an artist who has been commissioned to paint the Pink and White Terraces, which provides a pretext for them to visit the Terraces with Guide Sophia (and see the phantom canoe), as Lillian and Mattie do in *A Canoe in the Mist*, and to camp at Rotomahana and paint, as Sal and her friends do in *Sergeant Sal*. *Fire in the Sky* has been well-researched, and the Author’s Note, Historical Note and appended photographs indicate that Corlett has attempted to provide an accurate account of events. No new historical information about the eruption had emerged in the twenty years since Locke wrote *A Canoe in the Mist*, and the story is very similar: the visit to the Terraces, the vision of the canoe; the initial excitement of witnessing the eruption followed by a terrifying night sheltering from the mud; the search for survivors; and the funerals and tangi in Rotorua. The point of view is slightly different, because the protagonist is a teenage boy rather than a little girl, and because James also records the reactions of his Maori friend Will. Locke uses Guide Sophia to give a Maori perspective of events, but Corlett takes this further by making Will one of the main characters and having him explain aspects of Maori history and culture. Often this takes the form of rather stilted conversations between James and Will, in which they discuss the differences between their respective people.

Corlett does her best to make James's diary credible by having him write about the preoccupations of his daily life – his family, his school friends, his dog Tom, and his love of food. Her attempt to recreate the vernacular of the time can be unintentionally comical: 'By Jove! No wonder this has caused unrest among the natives.'⁵⁰ The diary form also has limitations, mainly in the implausibility of someone actually writing a diary in these circumstances. For example, James, sheltering in a whare while the earth shakes and mud rains from the sky, with no idea of where his father is and whether anyone will survive the night, calmly writes a description of the eruption in his diary – 'Silver electrical scintillations played at its edges. Flashes of scarlet, ochre, luminous green and blue flashed within it. A storm from Hades.'⁵¹ – and goes on to describe a boring class visit to the Auckland Museum. The reference to the Auckland Museum signals the difference between the earliest and the most recent novels about Tarawera. For Stredder, New Zealand was a primitive place with treacherous roads and rivers, and marauding Maori, while Corlett depicts a civilized country with sophisticated urban centres, such as James's home town of Auckland, with its 'grand buildings, fine hotels, modern shops and busy streets' bustling with 'well-dressed businessmen, ladies with parasols and perambulators, school children, urchins, workmen'.⁵²

The Tarawera books span a wide chronological period – 1899 to 2005 – and in many ways they encapsulate the changes that have occurred in the historical fiction genre since the first New Zealand-set novels were published during the Victorian period. *Doing and Daring* has many features in common with the other Victorian novels: the theme of the English settler family establishing a successful home in the bush; the inaccuracies resulting from the British author's unfamiliarity with New Zealand geography; the portrayal of Maori as 'other' and inferior to the 'civilised' Pakeha; and the moral education of the young protagonist, coupled with the evangelization of the natives. *Uncle Matt's Mountain* is typical of a number of books written during the 1950s and 1960s which used historical events merely as a background for an adventure story. Little attempt is made to provide an historically authentic account of the eruption, and the attitude towards Maori is patronising. *A Canoe in the Mist* represents a shift towards historical fiction which is closely based on the historical

record, and incorporates actual events and real people within its fictional framework. It has a female, rather than male, protagonist, and tries to integrate a Maori perspective into the story. *Fire in the Sky* is typical of many recent historical novels, which are based on extensive research (and use peritextual material to give authority to the text), but which reflect twenty-first century attitudes; in this case the rather idealised depiction of race relations.

While there is a chronological overlap between the historical novels discussed in this chapter and those in the earlier chapters on immigration to New Zealand, the books display an underlying difference in attitude. As Peter Gibbons observes:

Settler societies are composed initially of very unsettled people, migrants who have, by the very processes of migration, left behind much of what gives the world meaning for human beings, including kin, community and their accustomed landscape. The new world they enter is profoundly and disturbingly alien, and the colonists set out to make this world normal, from their perspective, through the destruction of what they encounter (which they often called “wilderness”), and the substitution of congenial European practices, forms and phenomena. [...] Migrants seek to transform the new world they are entering into a simulacrum of the old world they have come from.⁵³

The books considered in Chapters Four and Five illustrate this in their stories of British settlers who come to New Zealand and establish farms and settlements on the European model, often at the expense of the indigenous inhabitants and landscape. Gibbons goes on to point out that:

Later generations born into or brought up within the settler society from a very early age develop different attitudes. They have no direct experience of the old world, or very little, as an internalized, remembered frame of reference, so they cannot be shocked by the contrast between the old and the new to the extent that the migrants once were. Nor, as a consequence, do they feel so obsessively impelled to transform the “wilderness”. [...] These locally born settlers, then, live in a culture and environment which incorporates both introduced and indigenous phenomena, and they seek to understand and appreciate this world, to acquire knowledge of its names and dimensions and rhythms and interrelationships, so they will be at home in the land where they were born and brought up.⁵⁴

These locally born settlers have achieved what Linda Hardy terms ‘natural occupancy’ of the land; or in Stephen Turner’s words, a state of ‘colonial being’, a sense of being ‘all of a piece with the place’.⁵⁵ Coupled with this sense of belonging in New Zealand, many settlers felt a sense of pride in their country: ‘New Zealand

was perhaps not simply a 'Brighter Britain' but a distinctively special place and society'.⁵⁶ These attitudinal changes are reflected in literature, and Gibbons' comment on non-fiction writing from the late nineteenth century onwards is applicable to historical fiction as well; 'For many of the next generation of writers New Zealand would be a place of habitation, rather than islands of exile'.⁵⁷

For not only the writers of historical fiction set during the colonial period, but their young protagonists as well, New Zealand is their 'place of habitation', and most of them take their identity as New Zealanders for granted. As Gilderdale notes, 'Only Theodore and Winifred Harper's *Windy Island* (1934) and its sequel *Seventeen Chimneys* (1938) really explore the problems of a second generation New Zealander whose thinking has been shaped by some concept of a 'Home' he has never seen'.⁵⁸ The Cornish family in these books are proud of their English heritage, but this has less meaning for the children, and their parents fear that, 'Both Robert and Margery seemed destined to become raw young Colonials'.⁵⁹ Stevan Eldred-Grigg has observed that the South Island gentry (to which the Cornish family belong) 'were caught between two worlds':⁶⁰

Identification with Britain meant that the trip "Home" was a constant preoccupation in gentry life. [...] Parents felt a *tristesse* about Britain, the land they had left, and passed this feeling on to their children. A generation of New Zealanders was growing up which looked to another country for a fuzzy image of itself.⁶¹

Bobby is expected to go 'Home' to Oxford when he is older, and in the meantime, he must not allow his standards to slip:

His mother was always reminding him that an English gentleman never said *trap* when he meant *dogcart* – or *paddock* when he meant *field* – "...and, my dear little boy, where did you pick up that dreadful colonial accent? Don't say *aig*, say *egg*!"⁶²

However, Bobby, who was born in New Zealand, does not share his parents' nostalgia for England. 'He thought of the Southern Cross, high up in the sky, and with a surge of emotion felt glad that he had been born in New Zealand'.⁶³ He asks his father if he can defer going to Oxford for a year or two so he can see more of New Zealand and learn about sheep.

“But don’t you want to go to Oxford?”

“I suppose I do ... sometime.” Bob was facing his father squarely now. “I suppose every boy in New Zealand wants to go Home sometime – though it’s not like you and Mother think it is. You see –” he stumbled a little in his effort to express what he felt deep down “– you see, we’re Colonials, and that makes a difference.”⁶⁴

Mr Cornish admits that Bob has a point:

“After all, the boy has something on his side. We were born in the Old Country and haven’t thought of it from his angle. In spite of his English background, he looks upon New Zealand as his home; and probably most of this first generation feel pretty much as he does about it.”

Mrs Cornish sighed; the old Bridewell tradition was very dear to her. “If only it doesn’t turn him into one of those dreadfully rough young Colonials we see so much of!”⁶⁵

Bob’s friend Ann, however, thinks that they can be both Colonials and English: “‘Haven’t we got two homes? All this ... and England!’”⁶⁶ She tells Bob, “‘We’re ‘native-born’, of course, but our ancestors do count for something. As a matter of fact, they count for as much as all this.’”⁶⁷ The last paragraph of *Windy Island* implies that Bob can successfully combine both sides of his heritage: when Ann asks him, “‘Well! – Tussocks or Oxford?’” his reply is an emphatic “‘Both!’”⁶⁸ However, when he loses his gentry status (and income) in *Seventeen Chimneys*, the situation is altered:

All his life Bob had been conscious of a divided loyalty. New Zealand was in his blood, but England – the old manor house – occupied the background very definitely indeed. Since the bankruptcy, however, something had happened. He stood away from both, unattached.⁶⁹

Rejected by those of his own class, and no longer able to pursue his plans of studying in England, Bob abandons both tussocks and Oxford to forge a career in the United States. *Seventeen Chimneys* is one of only two novels considered in this chapter in which the young protagonist contemplates leaving New Zealand, and actually does so (and in the other, *A Respectable Girl*, the absence is intended to be only temporary). Unlike the novels about immigration to New Zealand, where in some cases the happy ending was for the characters to return to Britain, the protagonists of the novels about the colonial period regard themselves as New Zealanders and have no wish to leave. Possibly this is due in part to the age of the protagonists, who are children rather than

young adults (as Bob is by the end of *Windy Island*), and also to their social status. While the landed gentry could afford to travel 'Home' at regular intervals, most of the novels feature working-class families who lack the financial ability to leave New Zealand.

The questioning of New Zealand identity in *Windy Island* and *Seventeen Chimneys* has parallels in adult fiction of the time, such as G. B. Lancaster's *Promenade*, which was published in 1938, the same year as *Seventeen Chimneys*. As Gilderdale comments, 'Undoubtedly the feelings conveyed are those of the 1930s, when the books were written. The first fine flush of excitement had worn off the settlers, and the longer, more difficult task of forging a nation had begun.'⁷⁰ By the 1950s, when *Young Jane* was published, New Zealanders, in the wake of the country's centennial celebrations, felt much more secure in their national identity. Although Jane's home and garden are in the English style, and Cousin Caroline says that they "live here just as we live in England",⁷¹ Jane does not feel herself to be English. She is proud of the native birds and plants, and enjoys showing them to the newly arrived Rusty and Tilda, and she is irritated when Cousin Caroline calls paddocks 'meadows' and the bush 'woods' rather than giving them their New Zealand names. Gibbons has noted that, 'The "native-born" colonists were trying to depict themselves as the indigenous people. To "belong" in New Zealand they must regard the place and its phenomena not as alien but as normal.'⁷² Jane's identification with the local flora and fauna is an example of this, and it is taken to a higher level by her friend Mr Matthew, who lives in a house made of fern-trees, and gives the children cabbage tree, fern roots and fuschia berries to eat (along with imported raisins).

Several books published during the 1960s address the concept of national identity by comparing the attitudes of New Zealand-born children to those of their immigrant parents. In *Ben*, Ben and his friend Alfie accept their rather primitive living conditions without question, unlike their parents, who can remember their former lives in England:

The Harper home was hardly more than a big whare. It had only two rooms and a lean-to kitchen and a tin (corrugated iron) chimney. It would do, Mr Harper said, until they got on their feet, and then they would build a proper house. Mrs Harper was never done thinking about that proper house, and she wasn't too fond of

cooking in a camp oven, but Alfie didn't find fault with his home. He slept well and ate well and took care not to overwork himself. His bed was an upper bunk, and his mattress two sacks sewn end-to-end and filled with chaff. In it, when at last made to go to bed, he slept like a top and didn't know he was roughing it. Mrs Harper did, for in England fifteen years ago, she had lived in a two-storied stone house.⁷³

In *The Greenstone Axe*, the children are also unaware that they are 'roughing it' on their isolated farm and are happy with their busy lives. Their mother, on the other hand, is less accustomed to the loneliness, and hopes for the arrival of other settlers.

The protagonists of historical novels about the colonial period published during the latter part of the twentieth century take their New Zealand identity for granted, and think about it only when the arrival of a new-comer brings it to their attention. Lillian, in *A Canoe in the Mist*, takes it upon herself, as a native, to instruct English Mattie about New Zealand ways. In *Sergeant Sal*, Noah's perception of himself as an indigenous New Zealander is heightened by his relationship with Sal, whose ignorance about New Zealand customs and the dangers of the bush is compared with his own knowledge as a native-born colonist:

A kiwi scrambled through the leaf mould somewhere nearby, a morepork hooted in a tree above him, somewhere more distant a wild pig blundered through the undergrowth. Sal, alone and new to the bush, would be frightened by such sounds and therefore more reasonable tomorrow, but for Noah they were the sounds of his own country and he loved them.⁷⁴

Young New Zealand readers are asked to share in Noah's identification with the indigenous landscape, and to be amused by English Sal, who dismisses as nonsense Mr Miggs' warnings of pools of boiling water and mud, and sets off into the bush expecting to find villages and shops where she can buy food.

In Beale's *A Respectable Girl* (2006), Hannah also develops a sense of herself as a New Zealander through her encounters with English-born settlers and with the English soldiers who are stationed in New Plymouth. When she goes to England she is forced, as Bob is in *Windy Island*, to decide where her allegiance lies. Hannah declares, 'I am not an Englishwoman, I am a New Zealander',⁷⁵ and the section of the novel set in England compares her with the English girls she meets, and suggests that

the qualities which set her apart – her independence, her outspokenness, even her rapport with the servants in her father's stately home – not only make her superior to her insipid English counterparts, but are the qualities which mark her as a New Zealander. The English 'Home' in this book is not the wonderful place of expatriate dreams, and despite her underprivileged childhood and the war that is still being fought in Taranaki, Hannah has no wish to stay in Britain and is determined to return to New Zealand.

The other young colonists in the books considered in this chapter share Hannah's independence and lack of class consciousness. They also share other qualities, such as resourcefulness, the ability to cope with adversity and look after themselves without adult assistance, and the willingness to work hard to achieve their aims. It is implied that these are the characteristics which distinguish them from their British or European heritage and contribute to their unique identity as New Zealanders. As Kim Wilson has observed, 'The propagation of the [national] identity depends on the romanticization of the best or most honourable qualities',⁷⁶ and historical fiction serves to create or reinforce a sense of national identity by suggesting that those traits which are (currently) considered admirable are naturalized within the national psyche, and have been present since the early days of the nation. 'Through the process of retelling what qualities constitute a country's identity, the national character is instituted, idealized, and mythologized.'⁷⁷ Many of the historical novels set during the colonial period thus depict New Zealand as a society which is (or is in the process of becoming) multi-cultural and egalitarian, and which offers unlimited opportunities to its hard-working and enterprising young citizens; although it is only in the more recent books that Maori and females are shown as sharing in these opportunities.

Several books postulate a New Zealand identity which is not exclusively based on an English and Anglican heritage. The Irish Catholics in *Swag and Tucker* and the German Lutherans in *Escape from Sarau* see themselves as New Zealanders, even though they are aware that they diverge from the dominant culture. These books are written from inside those cultures rather than from the perspective of the British majority. They therefore make a more convincing case for a multi-cultural society than most of the books set during earlier periods, in which ethnic minorities, even if

sympathetically portrayed (like the Dalmatians in *South for Gold* or the Chinese in *Valley of Heavenly Gold*), are seen through the eyes of British characters, as ‘other’. In the majority of novels, however, the protagonists and focalizers are of English descent; and no books at all are written from a Maori point of view.

Reflecting the fact that these books are all written by non-Maori authors, New Zealand is portrayed as a predominantly Pakeha country, where Maori experiences are generally marginalized or ignored, and where Maori feature only when they interact with the colonial families who are the subject of these books. Almost half of the historical novels set during the colonial period have no Maori characters at all, while those that do generally allocate them fairly minor roles, which exemplify Clare Bradford’s previously quoted comments on children’s texts by non-indigenous authors. Maori appear as sage figures or alienated figures caught between cultures, and the predominant narrative patterns are those which feature ‘Indigenous-white friendships that contribute to the maturation of non-Indigenous figures.’⁷⁸ The ‘Indigenous-white friendships’ that feature in many of the historical novels discussed in this survey may have little historical basis, as Jeanine Graham has suggested that: ‘In both the North and South Islands, many colonists had no direct contact at all with the Maori people. [...] In men, women and children alike, ignorance bred distrust and eventually hostility. Scarcely any Pakeha children grew up with Maori friends.’⁷⁹ The Maori-Pakeha friendships in these books are a useful narrative and ideological device, but may not necessarily represent historical actuality.

The two earliest books – *Doing and Daring* (1899) and *The Runaway Princess* (1929) – give the most prominence to Maori characters, and have a similarly condescending attitude towards them. In *Doing and Daring*, Whero represents the indigenous figure caught between cultures; during the course of the book he constantly moves between his home and his English school at Tauranga, and his loyalty to his Maori heritage fluctuates. He speaks very good English (unlike the pidgin English attributed to Maori characters in other books), but there is no suggestion that he is on terms of equality with his friend Edwin. He is extremely emotional, and his frequent outbursts of tears or rage are compared unfavourably with the English boy’s self-control:

Edwin exerted all his self-command. He would not suffer one angry or fearful word to pass his lips, although both anger and fear were rising in his heart. The effort to keep himself as cool and quiet as he could was rewarded. Whero saw that he was not afraid; and the uncontrollable passion of the young savage expended itself in vain denunciations.⁸⁰

Edwin is also superior in practical matters; for example, when the boys find Whero's family where buried in mud, Whero sits 'howling and wailing'⁸¹ rather than helping Edwin to rescue the survivors. Edwin's moral ascendancy is demonstrated in the episode in which Whero tries to drown Lawford, and Edwin exerts himself to save him, preferring to die in the attempt rather than live knowing that he was an unwitting accomplice to someone's death.

Stredder's attitude to Maori, like that of other novelists of the Victorian period, is based on the concept of 'historical destiny', which assumed that Maori would be displaced by races higher up the evolutionary scale. This idea is implicit in the words of Mr Hirpington, who has lived in New Zealand for many years and considers himself an expert on the ways of his Maori neighbours:

"I can always manage my neighbours and appreciate them too; for they are men at heart, and we like each other. And there is a vein of honour in Nga-Hepé and his son according to their light which you may safely trust, yet they are not civilized Englishmen."⁸²

In Stredder's opinion, it is the duty of 'civilized Englishmen' like Mr Hirpington to 'manage' the Maori. Their best hope for the future lies in boys like Whero, who have had a Pakeha education: "He loves their learning; it will make him a mightier man than his fathers have ever been";⁸³ though not, it is implied, as mighty as the Pakeha.

The Runaway Princess conveys similar ideas of racial inequality. When Rona is kidnapped, Mrs Stewart fears the worst – "It tortures me to think of my child living among those awful savages. I would be less tortured if I believed her dead, my poor baby."⁸⁴ Her fears are shown to be unfounded, as Rona is very well treated by her Maori captors, and she is indulged by Te Huia, who treats her 'with love and kindness'⁸⁵ and grooms her to succeed him as leader of the tribe. Nevertheless, despite her initial reluctance to leave Te Huia and her Maori friends, Rona chooses to

return to her Pakeha family, and, as Gilderdale remarks, ‘No attempt is made to reconcile Maori and pakeha, and the assumption is made that Rona will slip into European ways and leave her Maori ones with consummate ease.’⁸⁶ For Peacocke, the only possible ‘happy ending’ is Rona’s complete rejection of her Maori life and the adoptive father who loves her; and there is no suggestion that there will be any further contact between them.

Although Te Huia has a prominent role in *The Runaway Princess*, and is in many ways an admirable character, Peacocke’s attitude towards Maori in general is patronising and at times insensitive, as in such comments as: ‘The Maoris, jabbering and laughing, strolled off in their indolent way, most of them with a naked piccanniny or two clinging to hands or clothing’;⁸⁷ ‘All the natives looked peaceful and contented, in a idle, barbaric way’;⁸⁸ and, ‘A tangi always attracts troops of natives from all over the country, as freshly-killed meat attracts flies.’⁸⁹ The old tohunga is a sinister figure, who conforms to the stereotype of the malevolent sage figure identified in Goldie’s *Fear and Temptation*. Other Maori are presented in a more positive light, such as the friendly and hospitable Maori fishing party the boys meet on the beach. Nevertheless, the point of view is always that of the Pakeha characters, who have a strong belief in their own superiority, in line with the social Darwinist ideas which were current at the time *The Runaway Princess* was written.

The commonly held view during this period, that Maori were a dying race, is also expressed in *Windy Island*, published a few years after *The Runaway Princess*. When Bobby visits a pa on Banks Peninsula, the authors set the scene with a brief description of the extermination of most of the South Island Maori by ‘the natives of the north’: ‘The remnant of a tribe still existed, however, in and around the Peninsula Hills, though their glory had departed even before the whalers introduced them to measles and rum.’⁹⁰ The pa itself consists of a few tumbledown manuka huts and a whare which is almost in ruins, and the dozen or so Maori who live there perform several dances for the Pakeha visitors in return for money. The authors make no comment on the enormous discrepancy between the Maori standard of living and that of Bobby’s family in their English-style mansion, and the lack of connection between the races is evidenced by the fact that Maori do not feature in the rest of the book.

A number of books written during the 1960s and 1970s share the patronising attitude towards Maori of *The Runaway Princess* written over thirty years earlier. In *Uncle Matt's Mountain*, the Maori coachman is tricked into believing that the Aboriginal boy Lukey is a great warrior because of the tribal scars on his chest, and Lukey dismisses him as a savage: “Me cibbilised man. You sabbidge!”⁹¹ Lukey himself is a comical figure who is frequently described in terms of animal imagery – he bellows like a calf, trembles like a wet dog, rolls his eyes like a horse, and has ‘foxy aboriginal ears’.⁹² Both the coachman and Lukey speak broken English, and the impression of ‘otherness’ is reinforced by the illustrations by Laurence Broderick in which both are pictured with exaggerated negroid features.



Illustration by Laurence Broderick for *Uncle Matt's Mountain* by Ruth Park, p.10.

E. M. Ellin's two books present an equally unrealistic picture of Maori, both featuring invented iwi engaged in fictitious inter-tribal wars, which are significant only when they impact on the Pakeha settlers:

“They [the Katuis], themselves, have been attacked by their old enemies, the Ho Tamas. Why the Ho Tamas chose this time to attack I don't know, but believe you me they have regretted it since. The Katuis had got hold of some guns and for the first time they were able to give the Ho Tamas Tally Ho. Chased them right back to their northern *pa* in fact. There they had a ding-dong go. In the rumpus the old Katui chief got killed and your friend Rangi is chief now. Yesterday the fighting-men returned triumphant, with all their grievances against the *Pakeha* forgotten, for after all it was the white man who provided the guns which had enabled them to overcome their ancient enemies.”⁹³

The tone of this passage and the vocabulary used to describe the conflict – ‘Tally Ho’, ‘ding-dong go’, ‘rumpus’ – suggests that the fighting between Maori is not a particularly serious matter. In Garth Tapper’s illustrations for *The Children of Clearwater Bay*, Maori are depicted as almost comically ferocious.



Illustration by Garth Tapper for *The Children of Clearwater Bay* by E. M. Ellin, p.140.

Another book of the 1960s, Cecil and Celia Manson’s *The Lonely One*, betrays the lack of knowledge of Maori culture which was so evident in their *The Adventures of Johnny Van Bart*. The only Maori character in *The Lonely One*, the Maori chief Rangi, is a fine man, who supports Bill when he is homeless and gives him his stallion, Pouaru. However, as Bill Pearson points out, he is presented from a Pakeha perspective:

Less serious improbabilities are sometimes the consequence of a writer’s imagination working within terms of Pakeha culture. Maoris are frequently seen

as individuals without those ties of kinship that do not exist in Pakeha society. The old nineteenth century chief in the Mansons' children's book lives alone in a solitary bush whare because he is a widower.⁹⁴

For the Mansons, the narrative necessity of having Rangi living alone and in a position to offer Bill a home outweighs the improbability of a chief living a solitary life rather than with his people.

Subsequent writers such as de Roo and Locke have been more sensitive to Maori culture, although the roles they allocate to Maori characters tend to be limited to indigenous helpers or sage figures. In de Roo's *Because of Rosie*, the children survive only through the support of their Maori neighbours. There is genuine friendship between them, despite some initial difficulties in adjusting to each others' ways; for example, the children are taken aback when curious Maori invade their privacy, while the children, in turn, unwittingly infringe rules in the Maori village. Hoani, who speaks English, facilitates communication between the two groups; although, as de Roo remarks, 'A lifetime's fear of Maoris could not be cured by one day's friendship with a cheerful runaway from a mission school'.⁹⁵ The eldest girl, Ellen, is particularly terrified of Maori and is convinced she will be eaten, but she overcomes her fears when the local Maori ask her help in treating their ailments, to the extent that she stays overnight in their village to tend her patients. In *Sergeant Sal*, Sal regards Maori as her enemies because her brother was in the 58th regiment which fought against Hone Heke, but she overcomes her prejudice when she meets Ana. Sal thinks that Ana is ignorant because she cannot speak English, but soon realises that their survival depends on Ana's knowledge of the bush; and that Ana is in fact better educated than she is, as she can read Maori while Sal is illiterate. Their friendship allows them to communicate without knowing each other's language: "You get to hear the way a person says things when you're together like me and Ana. Words ain't half as important as you might think."⁹⁶ As in *Jacky Nobody* and *The Bats' Nest*, mixed-race Jacky, who is caught between two cultures, acts as an intermediary between the Maori and Pakeha characters. Despite her sympathetic portrayal of Maori, de Roo is still writing from a Pakeha perspective, and her books conform to one of the predominant narrative patterns identified by Bradford; that is, 'stories in which white children befriend Indigenous characters, thereby enhancing

their own growth as individuals'.⁹⁷ Hoani, Ana and Jacky ensure the survival of the Pakeha children they befriend, and in the process they pass on their traditional knowledge, which not only assists the Pakeha characters' personal growth but gives them a greater claim to being, in Turner's words: 'Actually of the place. To be indigenous: to have come from here all along.'⁹⁸

The main Maori character in *A Canoe in the Mist* is the sage figure of Guide Sophia, whom Locke presents as an altogether admirable character. Strong and wise, she empathises with the little girls in their delight in the beauty of the Pink and White Terraces, and displays great courage in rescuing many people during the eruption. She also interprets Maori culture for the Pakeha characters. Locke implies that in some cases this culture is superior to that of the Pakeha; for example the Maori residents of Te Wairoa believe that the phantom canoe is an omen and are proved right, and the Pakeha teacher, Mr Haszard, who is sceptical, is killed in the eruption. When the old tohunga, Tuhoto, is rescued after four days buried in his whare, he is taken to hospital where the staff do not know that the body of a tohunga is tapu and treat him like an ordinary patient. 'When he died in their clean white bed they said it was from old age and weakness. There was, however, another explanation. *Pakeha* ignorance had broken the *tapu* and killed him.'⁹⁹ Although Locke focuses mainly on the experiences of the Pakeha characters, she acknowledges that the tragedy of the eruption is greater for the Maori, who have lost not just friends and family killed in the eruption but the land itself.

The most recent books set during the colonial period have different approaches to depicting Maori. In *Escape from Sarau*, Maori play only a very minor role and the attitude towards them is reminiscent of the novels written during the Victorian period, in that Maori are seen as being in need of medical attention, teaching and religious instruction. One of the main characters, Ludwig, becomes a missionary at the Lutheran Mission in Waitotara with the purpose of evangelizing the Maori and turning them into useful citizens; his fellow missionary is praised for taking in two Maori children and teaching them how to help around the house so that they can work for other settlers. Emilie wants to go to the Mission to help, but this is more as a way of escape from her abusive father and to be with Ludwig than from any real concern

for the Maori people. She shrinks from any contact with the only Maori she encounters; and her description emphasizes their difference from the people she is familiar with, noting details such as their bare feet, tattoos, and shabby, ill-fitting clothing. *Escape from Sarau* accurately represents the attitudes towards Maori of many nineteenth-century Pakeha.

The opposite is the case in *Fire in the Sky*, in which Pakeha James forms a close friendship with the Maori boy Wiremu (Will). Will dresses in European clothes, is well-educated, intelligent and articulate, and is passionate about preserving his Maori identity and ensuring the future of his race; although this is shown in his earnest lectures to James rather than through his actions. The character of Will is a good example of the alienated figure caught between cultures. “I despair at times. Our ancient culture cannot be erased in five minutes, yet the changes expected of us are huge.”¹⁰⁰ He values his Pakeha education but is resentful of Pakeha attitudes: “Why do you always claim to know everything? Why must *we* always be in the wrong?”¹⁰¹ Corlett acknowledges many of the commonly-held Victorian views about Maori, and sets out to discredit them. For example, the idea that Maori are savages is contradicted by James’s admiration for Will’s intelligence, and his opinion that Will ‘is indeed a most refined chap’;¹⁰² and the concept of the assimilation of Maori with the superior Europeans is vigorously disputed by Will’s vision of a separate but equal future for his people. Similarly, Will demolishes the theory that Maori are a dying race:

“It is true the future of my race has been in jeopardy. What else would you expect after being decimated by disease and defeat in the land wars? Defeat is bitter for a warrior race.”¹⁰³

In truth, yes, the last few years have been hard, but it is said we are now beginning to develop natural immunities from disease. So our numbers *are* beginning to rise, I can assure you of that.”¹⁰⁴

James is inspired by Will’s rhetoric to try and understand the Maori point of view. ‘How would I feel if suddenly a powerful new race of people overcame us and ridiculed all our beliefs? How would I feel if my race and culture were at risk?’¹⁰⁵ Nevertheless, the perspective remains a Pakeha one (it is James, not Will, writing the diary), and, as with Whero in *Doing and Daring*, it is implied that Will’s hopes for

the future depend on his Pakeha education and his success in urging his people 'to adopt European standards'.¹⁰⁶

Beale provides the most positive and realistic Maori character in any of the books about the colonial period. Unlike Will, Hannah's Maori foster mother, Rawinia, is not primarily a mouthpiece for the author's arguments, and neither does she conform to the stereotypical roles of sage figure, indigenous helper or alienated figure caught between cultures. Her ethnicity is not important to Hannah or her brother – she is simply their mother, and they accept her culture as readily as that of their English step-father. They speak Maori, and when war breaks out between Maori and settlers in Taranaki they go to England so that they will not have to participate in the fighting against their Maori friends and their foster brother, Arama. The difference between the condescending attitude towards Maori of the earlier books in this chapter and the equality between the races portrayed in *A Respectable Girl* illustrates the shifts in Pakeha sensibilities which have occurred in New Zealand society during recent decades.

Although Maori characters (and a limited range of other non-British characters) feature in the novels in this chapter, the culture represented, as in the immigration novels discussed in Chapters Four and Five, is overwhelmingly English. However, the characters tend to be working class, not the middle-class families of the earlier immigrant stories, reflecting the fact that the majority of the books about the colonial period have been published since the 1960s, when, as noted in previous chapters, the social status of the characters in historical novels became predominantly lower class. The only books to feature middle-class characters, *Windy Island* and *Seventeen Chimneys*, were published in the 1930s. In *Windy Island*, Bobby's wealthy middle class family live in a large house, modelled on the ancestral home in England, and furnished with antiques. Bobby's mother sits and reads, while the servants look after the house and grounds, and the governess educates the children until they are old enough to go to private schools. Although Mr Cornish's bankruptcy affects the family's status, and the fact that they have 'lost caste'¹⁰⁷ means that Bob is no longer a suitable suitor for Ann, it does not alter the innate superiority of the Cornish family, descended as they are from generations of landed gentry in England. Mr Beardsley,

the local business man who buys the Cornish family home in *Seventeen Chimneys*, comes of less exalted stock, and is ‘physically coarse, over-dressed, unmannerly, and oozing success’;¹⁰⁸ while his overweight, pink son Jim is compared unfavourably with the physically attractive, finely built, and graceful Bob. The gulf between the classes depicted in these novels of the 1930s is less obvious in the later books, which have working-class rather than middle-class protagonists. The farming family in *Young Jane* may have pretensions to gentility (they live in a big house with a large garden, and drink tea from a silver teapot), but they do not have servants and they do the farm and house work themselves. The young aunts play croquet and go to balls, but not until they have milked the cows. Grandmother reprimands Cousin Caroline when she declares that she would “rather die than touch a cow.” “Fiddlesticks, Caroline!” had been Grandmother’s retort. “Sometimes, my child, it is possible to be too ladylike!”¹⁰⁹ Grandmother also overrides Cousin Caroline’s objection to Rusty and Tilda (they were steerage passengers and their father is at the gold diggings), and encourages Jane to make friends with them.

This flattening of the differences between classes is typical of those novels in which class is mentioned, as part of the process of depicting New Zealand as an egalitarian society. For example, in *A Canoe in the Mist*, there is a clear distinction at the beginning between Lillian, the daughter of a hotel maid, and Mattie, the child of wealthy tourists, but by the end, when they have lost everything in the eruption, they are equal. They even wear identical dresses, made by Lillian’s mother from material donated to the victims of the disaster; and ‘The two girls looked like sisters in their brand-new dresses.’¹¹⁰ Class differences can be erased by the shared experience of coping with the challenges of living in New Zealand, whether these are traumatic experiences such as the Tarawera eruption, or the more mundane day-to-day challenges of making a living in a new land. In *Sergeant Sal*, the trip through the bush effaces the differences in status between Sal and Mr Teesdale when he teaches her to paint; although she chooses to return to her job as a housemaid because she feels she is needed.

In *A Respectable Girl*, there are class differences in both New Plymouth and England, but Hannah transcends these and is equally friendly with both upper and lower class

characters, serving as an exemplar of New Zealand's lack of class consciousness. *Be Counted!* contrasts the hand-to-mouth existence of Amy's family with the comfortable life of Aunt Delia, who, as a doctor's wife, lives in a large and luxurious home and employs a housekeeper. Amy's privileged life with her aunt and uncle is also compared with that of the housekeeper's daughter, Mary, who has to go out to work because she cannot afford to stay at school. However, while there is a discrepancy between upper and lower class expectations, *Be Counted!* implies that this is due not to any intrinsic difference between people (as in *Windy Island*), but simply to luck. Poverty is caused by unfortunate circumstances; for example, Amy's family is poor because her father has lost his job and taken to drink; and in Mary's case, Amy and her school-friends conclude 'that only good fortune stood between each of us and a similar predicament.'¹¹¹ The end of the book looks forward to the future when the availability of education will provide equal opportunities for everyone and class differences will disappear.

Unlike novels set during the New Zealand Wars and the gold rushes, in which boys went off alone to have adventures, nearly all of the books of the colonial period are family stories. Consequently, there are many more female characters, and female focalizers predominate, particularly in the more recent books; while the earliest novels have male focalizers, all but two of the books published from the 1990s onwards are focalized by their female protagonists. The roles available to girls have also enlarged over time, from domestic duties only, to work as nurses, teachers or shop girls; and the most recent books suggest that in the future girls will go to university and enter the professions.

Stredder assigns traditional roles to her young characters in *Doing and Daring*. Edwin and Cuthbert work outside on the farm with their father, while their sister Audrey does the housekeeping and cooking. The boys, particularly Edwin, are active in rescuing people after the eruption, while Audrey's contribution is to hire herself out to the wife of the local station owner as a charwoman to support her siblings. This is not an option for the boys; Audrey tells them, "There are some things only a girl can do."¹¹² The clear demarcation of male and female roles, and the list of things 'only a girl can do' are spelled out by Ellin in *The Greenstone Axe*:

While the boys worked with their father Nan was kept equally busy. There was bread to bake, cows to milk, butter to be churned. Soap and candles did not make themselves. Neither did the wild pigs that roamed the hills turn themselves into hams, sides of bacon or pork pies. Father did the butchering but it was the women who undertook the curing. Wool from their small flock of sheep was spun and knitted into warm garments by Nan and her mother. There was never a day that was long enough to do all that needed doing.¹¹³

Nan accepts her domestic responsibilities, as does twelve-year-old Molly in Ellin's other novel, *The Children of Clearwater Bay*, who copes with the unenviable task of trying to feed and care for her five siblings, including two-year-old twins, in her parents' absence. Thirteen-year-old Sophie in Dallas's *Bush* series is likewise responsible for doing the housework and looking after her younger brother and sisters when their mother is away.

De Roo's female characters are not quite so ready to accept this limited view of the female role in life. In *Because of Rosie*, Ellen adds nursing to her domestic routines; although her competence in diagnosing and treating illnesses and preparing medicines when she has had no training (and no resources other than a mouse-chewed book entitled *Everybody's Home Doctor*) is rather implausible. At the age of sixteen, she seems to have an instinctive knowledge of how to cure a wide range of ailments, from stitching up a hunter gored by a wild boar to treating a man suffering from starvation and memory loss. Her younger sister Sarah Jane is eager to have an education, but Ellen is reluctant to allow this. Mr Stonecroft, who has offered to teach Sarah Jane asks:

"And why should an intelligent girl not satisfy her search for knowledge, my dear Mother Hen?"

"I'll not deny the girl's sharp enough and if 'twas one of the boys I'd beg you to encourage him and teach him, for there'd be a future in it. But what can a woman do with book learning? A woman needs a light hand with pastry and a firm hand with children, that's what our Aunt Kate used to say, and she'll not learn either of those from books and microscopes."¹¹⁴

However, the contemporary opinions Ellen is voicing are contradicted by her reliance on Sarah Jane's ability to read *Everybody's Home Doctor* to her.

In *Sergeant Sal*, Sal is also offered an opportunity to move outside the domestic sphere when Mr Teesdale teaches her how to paint. At thirteen, Sal has already been a housemaid for several years. She knows that as a working class girl she will never have the opportunity to become a painter, even when Mr Teesdale gives her painting equipment. He is surprised when Sal tells him that housemaids have no leisure for painting:

“But you’re an artist Sal. You must paint.”

Sal smiled at him, pitying the innocence of the rich. “I’ll draw me little pictures to amuse the Padgett children, or meself if I’m not too wore out by bedtime. That’s me nature. And I’ll do better for all you’ve learned me. And going back to her that needs me that I left without giving notice, I dare say that’s me nature too.”¹¹⁵

Although Sal may not be able to follow her artistic bent, she is more fortunate than many of the female characters in other colonial novels, in that she can choose her own path in life and earn her own living. She declines the opportunity to live with her brother or to join her younger sister with her adoptive family in Auckland, preferring to be independent: “I got a good position with the Padgetts, no one over me and a room of me own.”¹¹⁶ Sal is also more fortunate than most Victorian girls, in that she has had an adventurous journey through the bush and briefly experienced the freedom normally accorded only to boys (although she has been able to do this only because she is disguised as a boy).

As previously noted, most of the historical novels published since the 1990s have female focalizers, and they consider the role of women and girls in colonial society through documenting the experiences of individual young women. *Tides of Time* uses the time-slip device to draw overt comparisons between the lives of nineteenth century Martha and twentieth century Jaz, and compares the latter’s life of comparative leisure and vastly expanded opportunities with Martha’s hardworking and restricted lifestyle. The other books leave readers to make these comparisons for themselves. In *Swag and Tucker*, Mary’s younger brother Brendan is very intelligent so he is sent to college, while Mary, who is equally bright, stays at home helping her mother, and teaching the children in their little settlement. She does not intend to make teaching her career, however, as at sixteen she is already engaged, and plans to marry at eighteen. Emilie is in a similar situation in *Escape from Sarau*. Girls are

expected to work in the house, marry young and have children, and there is no time for frivolous pursuits; for example, Emilie is not allowed to associate with an English woman who encourages her to paint. Emilie voices rebellious thoughts in her diary: 'We shouldn't have to marry and keep having children. We should be able to teach or work with sick people or work in offices – or even write books or become artists.'¹¹⁷ However, although she eventually leaves home to become a music teacher, she, like Mary, sees this as just a temporary measure, as she is already engaged and plans to marry when she turns seventeen. Both Mary and Emilie come from large families and it appears likely that they, too, will soon have many children of their own.

Fleur Beale offers a more comprehensive critique of colonial attitudes to women in *A Respectable Girl*. The title is ironic, as Hannah is not 'respectable' in the eyes of colonial society, partly because of her family history (her mother left her husband and ran off with another man), and partly because of her own actions (she works in a shop, and delivers a friend's baby). Her English family do not think she is respectable either, because she wears shabby clothes, admits that she has worked for a living, and expresses views on unfeminine topics such as the Taranaki War. Hannah's experiences in England highlight the difference in opportunities for males and females. Her brother Jamie fulfils his dream of becoming an engineer, while Hannah is left behind as the dependant of her English relatives. When she ultimately gains financial independence, it is not through her own efforts (she is too young to train as a nurse as planned), but through an annuity from her father negotiated by her brother.

Hannah constantly chafes against the restrictions imposed on her by her sex. In contrast to her friend Judith, who is happy to conform to societal norms, Hannah is outspoken, 'bold' in her dealings with men, and has un-Victorian ideas about sex and women's rights (although Beale has one of the other characters noting the similarity of Hannah's opinions to those of Mary Wollstonecraft, thereby adding plausibility and presumably averting any inference of 'presentism'). Hannah's ideas, unconventional by English standards, are attributed by Beale partly to the influence of Hannah's Maori foster mother, Rawinia, who has a more pragmatic attitude to sex

and women's roles than Judith's mother. For example, Hannah learns the facts of life quite young, while Judith is kept in ignorance until her wedding day; and Rawinia subverts her husband's instructions to Hannah on her pre-ordained path in life:

"Women are made different from men, for which we may offer thanks to whichever deity we happen to believe in. It's your nature to care, to bear children, to look after your husband. Can't escape it. Better accept it."

Rawinia said, "It's what men have to believe if they want a warm bed and a full belly."¹¹⁸

A Respectable Girl, as a young adult novel, deals with issues not found in books for younger readers, and one of these is the plight of women who cannot avoid regular and often difficult pregnancies. Hannah's mother dies in child-birth, and a number of her friends have trouble coping with their large families; for example, one has five children under four, including new-born twins. Hannah, therefore, frequently expresses her determination not to marry and have children. She changes her mind when she falls in love, and, like Mary and Emilie, she is married while still in her teens. However, her husband's betrothal gift to her is to find out about methods of contraception, which allows her to enjoy an active sex life without the fear of pregnancy. In this, as in her ideas about equality between the sexes, she is more like a girl of the late twentieth or early twenty-first century than of the 1860s when the book is set. Beale endorses Hannah's rebellion against the mores of her time by having the most intelligent and attractive characters in the novel – Captain Lindhurst and his grandmother, and Mr and Mrs Delaney – support her, and depicting those who oppose her as narrow-minded. Judith, the pattern of docile Victorian girl-hood, dies, leaving Hannah, with her progressive outlook, as the role model (and the new wife of Judith's handsome newly-widowed husband).

Be Counted! has an overtly feminist agenda. It is set towards the end of the Victorian era and draws attention to the changes that have occurred in women's lives since the arrival of the first immigrants, as well as to the far greater changes it is anticipated will occur as a result of women's suffrage. While female colonists in the early days of settlement were described as engaging mainly in domestic routines, by 1893 the women of Dunedin depicted in this book also have careers as teachers, artists (in the person of Frances Hodgkins), and factory workers, and are involved in the political

sphere as union organizers and advocates of temperance and votes for women. According to Amy's Aunt Delia, women's suffrage will transform New Zealand society, because women will work for social benefits like free hospital treatment, care of the elderly, and access to education: 'To hear Aunt tell it, the world will change when women can vote. There will be enough to go around and all girls will be able to go to school for as long as they want. We can be lawyers, doctors, even cab drivers if we want. It makes me dizzy to think of it!'¹¹⁹ Amy and her friend Mary both intend to go to university and have professional careers. Men barely feature in *Be Counted!* The few who do appear are no match for Aunt Delia and her fellow suffragists, and are either weak (Uncle Joshua); obnoxious (Henry Fish, the Dunedin MP opposed to women's suffrage); or both (Amy's drunken father). The death of Amy's father is seen in a positive light: her mother declares that 'now she will be able to manage everything herself',¹²⁰ and she promptly obtains a job at a hotel and restores the family finances and her self-esteem.

However, the most recent historical novel of the colonial period suggests that women's suffrage will be slow to provide the benefits to young women promised in *Be Counted!* In *Poor Man's Gold*, Mrs Radcliffe votes in the 1899 elections, but her eighteen-year-old daughter Olive is not allowed to leave home to train as a nurse, in direct contrast to the freedom given to her younger brother: "'Reuben is allowed to do whatever he likes, camp out on his own, explore in the city, wander all over the countryside, while I stay tied to your apron strings!'"¹²¹ *A Respectable Girl* and *Be Counted!* are the only historical novels for children and young people set during the colonial period which seriously challenge women's place in colonial society, and the overall impression of these books is that in general girls and young women are quite contented in their domestic sphere.

In fact, nearly all of the young protagonists of the novels set during the colonial period, male as well as female, are depicted as being satisfied with their lives. The young colonials in these texts are hardworking and independent, and are quite capable of coping with the hardships of their pioneering lifestyle. Most, indeed, do not see their lifestyle as being particularly difficult, as it is all they have ever known. In spite of natural disasters such as the Tarawera eruption, and other dangers such as fires and

floods, New Zealand is portrayed as a good place to live. For the protagonists of these books (all of them Pakeha, most of them English), it is New Zealand, not their parents' country of origin, which represents 'home'. The New Zealand-born children in these books have no experience of living elsewhere, and no desire to do so.

¹Gibbons, 'Non-Fiction', p.55, and Theodore and Winifred Harper, *Windy Island* (London: Hutchinson, 1934), p.196.

²Gibbons, 'Non-Fiction', p.55.

³Jeanine Graham, 'The Pioneers', in *The Oxford Illustrated History of New Zealand*, ed. by Keith Sinclair (Auckland: Oxford University Press, 1993), pp.49-74 (p.66-67).

⁴Isabel Maud Peacocke, *The Runaway Princess* (London: Ward Lock, 1929), p.9.

⁵Peacocke, p.9.

⁶Peacocke, p.11.

⁷Peacocke, p.12.

⁸Bentley, *Captured by Maori*, pp.212-235.

⁹Peacocke, p.27.

¹⁰Harper, *Windy Island*, p.26.

¹¹Harper, *Windy Island*, p.26.

¹²Harper, *Windy Island*, p.5.

¹³Harper, *Windy Island*, p.287.

¹⁴Harper, *Seventeen Chimneys*, p.146.

¹⁵Soper, Eileen, *Young Jane*, illus by Evelyn Clouston (Christchurch: Whitcombe & Tombs, 1955), p.15.

¹⁶Soper, p.12.

¹⁷Locke, 'Children's Historical Fiction in New Zealand', p.9.

¹⁸Cecil and Celia Manson, *The Lonely One* (Christchurch: Whitcomb & Tombs, 1963), p.40.

¹⁹Manson, *The Lonely One*, p.2.

²⁰The only other Jewish characters in the books in this survey are Levy in Ronald Syme's *Gipsy Michael* who is presented in a very unflattering light, and a more sympathetic, though very minor character in *Poor Man's Gold* by Kath Beattie.

²¹Manson, *The Lonely One*, p.17.

²²Manson, *The Lonely One*, p.116.

²³Probably Onga Onga near Waipukurau, according to the Biographical Note on the inside cover.

²⁴Frank Livingstone Combs, *Ben*, illus. unknown (Auckland: Blackwood & Janet Paul, 1966), p.36.

²⁵Combs, p.35.

²⁶Fitzgibbon and Spiers, p.40.

²⁷Locke, 'Children's Historical Fiction in New Zealand', *Historical News*, p.8.

²⁸Anne Jacqueline Holden, *No Trains at the Bay* (Glasgow: Blackie, 1976), p.1.

²⁹Holden, p.141.

³⁰Anne de Roo, *Because of Rosie* (London: Heinemann, 1979), p.110.

³¹Fitzgibbon and Spiers, p.11.

³²Watson, *Cambridge Guide to Children's Books in English*, p.202.

³³Anne de Roo, *Sergeant Sal* (Auckland: Random Century, 1991), p.17.

³⁴Margaret Hall, *Swag and Tucker* (Dunedin: McIndoe, 1993), p.56.

³⁵Hall, p.93.

³⁶Hall, p.36.

³⁷Hall acknowledges the help of a large number of individuals and organizations, including the Canterbury Education Board, the Police Historian, and the archivists of Government departments and Banks. She lists the fictitious characters in the book and notes that 'All other persons mentioned either lived in or visited South Westland during 1887-1888, and where possible I have contacted their descendants to obtain permission to mention them in the text.' Hall, p.7.

³⁸Zana Bell, *The Tides of Time* (Auckland: Scholastic, 1996), p.87.

³⁹Bell, p.219.

⁴⁰Fleur Beale, *A Respectable Girl*, p.6.

⁴¹Stredder, p.124.

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- ⁴² The narrator is speaking to Australian narratees: 'I was only fourteen when I was blown up by a volcano. No, it wasn't in Australia. You know very well there are none of the blowing-up kind of volcanoes in Australia. It was in New Zealand.' p.5.
- Uncle Matt's Mountain* was possibly published as a school text; it is a small paperback book of 64 pages with comprehension exercises at the end. However, Gilderdale includes it in *A Sea Change*.
- ⁴³ Ruth Park, *Uncle Matt's Mountain*, illus. by Laurence Broderick (London: Macmillan, 1962), p.9.
- ⁴⁴ Park, p.60.
- ⁴⁵ Park, p.61.
- ⁴⁶ Park, p.5.
- ⁴⁷ Elsie Locke, *A Canoe in the Mist*, illus. by John Shelley (London: Cape, 1984), p.175.
- ⁴⁸ Locke, *A Canoe in the Mist*, p.175.
- ⁴⁹ Locke, *A Canoe in the Mist*, p.197.
- ⁵⁰ Shirley Corlett, *Fire in the Sky: The Diary of James Collier, Tarawera, 1886* (Auckland: Scholastic, 2005), p.62.
- ⁵¹ Corlett, p.99.
- ⁵² Corlett, p.78.
- ⁵³ Peter Gibbons, 'Cultural Colonization and National Identity', *The New Zealand Journal of History*, 36 (2002), 5-17 (p.7).
- ⁵⁴ Gibbons, 'Cultural Colonization', p.8.
- ⁵⁵ Turner, p.59.
- ⁵⁶ Gibbons, 'Non-Fiction', p.55.
- ⁵⁷ Gibbons, 'Non-Fiction', p.55.
- ⁵⁸ Gilderdale, *A Sea Change*, p.68.
- ⁵⁹ Harper, *Windy Island*, p.27.
- ⁶⁰ Stevan Eldred-Grigg, *A Southern Gentry: New Zealanders Who Inherited the Earth* (Wellington: Reed, 1980), p.104.
- ⁶¹ Eldred-Grigg, *A Southern Gentry*, p.103.
- ⁶² Harper, *Windy Island*, p.15.
- ⁶³ Harper, *Windy Island*, p.57.
- ⁶⁴ Harper, *Windy Island*, p.196.
- ⁶⁵ Harper, *Windy Island*, p.197.
- ⁶⁶ Harper, *Windy Island*, p.178.
- ⁶⁷ Harper, *Windy Island*, p.284.
- ⁶⁸ Harper, *Windy Island*, p.286.
- ⁶⁹ Harper, *Seventeen Chimneys*, p.82.
- ⁷⁰ Gilderdale, *A Sea Change*, p.68.
- ⁷¹ Soper, p.12.
- ⁷² Gibbons, 'Non-Fiction', p.55.
- ⁷³ Combs, p.13.
- ⁷⁴ de Roo, *Sergeant Sal*, p.57.
- ⁷⁵ Beale, *A Respectable Girl*, p.155.
- ⁷⁶ Wilson, p.132.
- ⁷⁷ Wilson, p.132.
- ⁷⁸ Bradford, *Unsettling Narratives*, p.72.
- ⁷⁹ Graham, 'The Pioneers', p.62.
- ⁸⁰ Stredder, p.230.
- ⁸¹ Stredder, p.186.
- ⁸² Stredder, p.302.
- ⁸³ Stredder, p.41.
- ⁸⁴ Peacocke, p.45.
- ⁸⁵ Peacocke, p.181.
- ⁸⁶ Gilderdale, *A Sea Change*, p.41.
- ⁸⁷ Peacocke, p.47.
- ⁸⁸ Peacocke, p.143.
- ⁸⁹ Peacocke, p.61.
- ⁹⁰ Harper, *Windy Island*, p.55.
- ⁹¹ Park, p.10.

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- ⁹² Park, p.12, p.14, p.46 and p.56.
- ⁹³ E. M. Ellin, *The Children of Clearwater Bay*, illus. by Garth Tapper (London: Macmillan, 1969), p.156.
- ⁹⁴ Bill Pearson, p.123.
- ⁹⁵ de Roo, *Because of Rosie*, p.67.
- ⁹⁶ de Roo, *Sergeant Sal*, p.79.
- ⁹⁷ Bradford, *Unsettling Narratives*, p.72.
- ⁹⁸ Turner, p.39.
- ⁹⁹ Locke, *A Canoe in the Mist*, p.190.
- ¹⁰⁰ Corlett, p.75.
- ¹⁰¹ Corlett, p.155.
- ¹⁰² Corlett, p.88.
- ¹⁰³ Corlett, p.85.
- ¹⁰⁴ Corlett, p.86.
- ¹⁰⁵ Corlett, p.74.
- ¹⁰⁶ Corlett, p.73.
- ¹⁰⁷ Harper, *Windy Island*, p.145.
- ¹⁰⁸ Harper, *Windy Island*, p.33.
- ¹⁰⁹ Soper, p.44.
- ¹¹⁰ Locke, *A Canoe in the Mist*, p.191.
- ¹¹¹ Janine McVeagh, *Be Counted! The Diary of Amy Phelps, Dunedin, 1893* (Auckland: Scholastic, 2007), p.97.
- ¹¹² Stredder, p.152.
- ¹¹³ E. M. Ellin, *The Greenstone Axe*, illus. by Elizabeth Sutherland (Auckland: Stockton House, 1975) p.11.
- ¹¹⁴ de Roo, *Because of Rosie*, p.121.
- ¹¹⁵ de Roo, *Sergeant Sal*, p.143.
- ¹¹⁶ de Roo, *Sergeant Sal*, p.143.
- ¹¹⁷ Leone, *Escape from Sarau: The Diary of Emilie Ritter, Nelson, 1882-83* (Auckland: Scholastic, 2006), p.139.
- ¹¹⁸ Beale, *A Respectable Girl*, p.108.
- ¹¹⁹ McVeagh, *Be Counted*, p.127.
- ¹²⁰ McVeagh, *Be Counted*, p.116.
- ¹²¹ Kath Beattie, *Poor Man's Gold: The Diary of Reuben Radcliffe, Northland, 1899-1900* (Auckland: Scholastic, 2008), p.157.

CONCLUSION

CHOOSING OUR PASTS

We choose our pasts, and in doing so, we shape our present and future.¹

The fundamental story of New Zealand historical fiction for children considered in the previous chapters is the way in which New Zealand has become ‘a place of habitation’² for its young protagonists, and a place with a history worth recording (and worth turning into fiction). The process of making the place habitable, then, involves both making it a fit place for historical fiction and making historical fiction fitting for the place.

The development of the genre of historical fiction for children and young people in New Zealand can be described in terms of three chronological progressions – generic, ideological, and historical. The first two, which concern the evolution of the genre, and the way historical fiction has reflected and responded to societal concerns, can be traced over the course of one hundred and forty-six years, from the publication of the first New Zealand historical novel for children in 1862 to those published in 2008; while the third, the history of New Zealand from the thirteenth century to the present, covers approximately eight hundred years.

Although there are similarities to New Zealand historical fiction for adults, and also to historical fiction in other colonial countries, especially Australia, New Zealand historical fiction for children has its own distinctive characteristics. The genre was slow to take root in New Zealand, with fewer than thirty historical novels published in the century following the appearance of *Distant Homes* in 1862. Since the 1960s, however, over one hundred and thirty works of historical fiction for children have been published, more than forty of them since 2001. For the first six decades, New Zealand historical novels for children dealt exclusively with the nineteenth century settlement of New Zealand by British immigrants, and/or the New Zealand Wars, but from the 1920s the range of topics expanded to include other historical periods and events, such as the pre-European and early contact periods and the gold rushes. Books dealing with twentieth century history, which first appeared during the 1960s, now make up the majority of historical novels for children published in New Zealand.

The emphasis has moved from documenting the protagonists' arrival in New Zealand and the creation of a new country to stories in which 'New Zealandness' is taken for granted.

Initially, New Zealand historical novels tended to be adventure stories set in the past, focusing on exciting plots rather than historical authenticity. Victorian and early twentieth century novelists were less concerned with imparting accurate historical information than with telling moral tales or imperial adventure stories, in which historical aspects were often modified to support the authors' evangelistic or political agenda. Although adventure stories with an historical setting have continued to appear, drawn, in some cases, more from the authors' imaginations than from the historical record, historical novels increasingly attempt to provide credible information based on extensive research and reflecting current historiography. Many writers, particularly those of more recent books, provide additional historical information in the form of author's notes and references; though the sense of authority which this peritextual material confers on the fictional text can be problematical, as it tends to validate the version of the past presented in the novel. Illustrations have been used for both ideological and informative purposes, although less frequently in recent texts except in the form of photographs.

Changes have also occurred in the literary aspects of historical fiction, such as language, style, and narrative techniques. The most significant are those which establish the perspective through which historical events are mediated. The Victorian novels have an overt narrator and narratee, with the narrator often addressing readers directly; but in later novels the authorial voice is less evident and the perspective is that of the young protagonists. The device of a first person narrative, first used by Satchell in *The Greenstone Door*, became increasingly popular after the 1960s, and has been the predominant form since the advent of the 'My Story' series in 2003. Dual narratives, in which separate strands of the narrative are focalized by either two contrasting protagonists living at the same time or, more commonly, one protagonist living in the present and one in the past, have been used by writers (mainly in the past decade) to provide a more complex view of history. While Maori (or part-Maori) focalizers first appear in novels of the 1930s, and have been used sporadically since

then, and a small number of recent texts are focalized by protagonists of other ethnicities, the overwhelming majority of historical novels are focalized by British protagonists.

The second way of approaching the historical fiction genre is to consider the way the texts have been influenced by the socio-cultural values of the time they were written, and the ideological implications of their responses to the societal concerns of the day. There is in fact a double influence at work, as historical novels reflect not just the preoccupations of their authors, but those of the historiography on which the historical aspects of the books are based, which is itself a product of its time. While historical novels are set in the past, they inevitably reproduce the attitudes of the writer's present, and shifts in ideology since 1862 can be traced in historical fiction for children. Imperialism and religious certainties imbue historical fiction for children until the 1930s, resulting in texts in which the British immigrants' right (or, in fact, duty) to colonize New Zealand and transform it into a white, Protestant and middle-class 'Better Britain' is largely unquestioned. Adventures tend to be the preserve of boys, while their sisters are confined almost entirely to the domestic sphere. The gradual changes in attitudes in New Zealand society are replicated in fiction; for example, while male and female roles remained clearly differentiated during the conservative 1950s, as evidenced in the books of that period, the rise of feminism since that time has led to an increase in the number of female protagonists and focalizers, as well as the granting of greater agency and a wider range of roles for female characters.

Another major shift has occurred in the treatment of Maori in historical fiction. Victorian novels frequently justify the displacement of Maori by depicting them as 'savages', or as a dying race, and these attitudes were slow to change. Even in fairly recent books, Maori are divided into 'good' Maori who support the British colonists, and 'bad' Maori who oppose them, and they are assigned a limited range of roles. The literary reaction, in a number of texts, to the Maori urban migration of the 1950s and 1960s was a nostalgia for the traditional 'Maori' way of life which appeared to have irrevocably vanished. The Maori 'renaissance' from the 1970s onwards, marked by events such as the 1974/75 Land March and the establishment of the Waitangi

Tribunal in 1975, resulted in greater awareness of Maori issues in New Zealand as a whole. It could be expected that this would be mirrored in both an increase in the number of books featuring Maori characters and a greater sensitivity to Maori culture. In fact, this had already occurred in children's fiction prior to this time: Gilderdale notes that books of the 1960s featured 'attempts by Pakeha writers to offer a more truthful perspective on the Maori experience of colonization, and to avoid the sentimental or disparaging stereotypes which had occurred in so much earlier writing'.³ Historical novels such as Finlayson's *The Springing Fern*, which gives a Maori perspective of colonization (including a Maori view of the New Zealand Wars pre-dating Belich's revisionist history by over twenty years), suggest that creative artists, among them authors of historical fiction for children, are often ahead of their time and may instigate societal changes as well as reproducing them.

Postcolonial readings of history have also contributed to a more inclusive version of New Zealand history in recent historical fiction. However, the revision of the traditional Eurocentric view of history in recent texts is not free of ideological implications; and the greater agency given to Maori characters and the rather idealized view of Maori-Pakeha relations in some novels can be seen as reflecting modern concerns rather than historical actualities. The absence of any historical novels for children by Maori authors means that all representations of Maori and their history are mediated through Pakeha writers (even if the focalizing characters are Maori). The ideological assumptions underlying historical fiction are not merely of academic interest; they can have a formative and ongoing influence on readers' attitudes. As Mary Rubio suggests, the 'constructed values' of the texts in relation to such things as gender and race are internalised by child readers: 'A child's reading is part of what constructs the child who becomes the adult.'⁴

The third way of considering the genre of New Zealand historical fiction for children is to examine what these books tell their readers about this country's past. Although, as Elsie Locke points out, historical fiction 'illuminates only a fragment of the past',⁵ historical novels make reference to many major episodes of New Zealand history, and these 'fragments' illuminate significant events and changing patterns in the experiences of New Zealanders from pre-European times to the present. (There are,

of course, gaps and omissions, notably the virtual absence of books recording the experience of the colonized rather than the colonizers.) As has been discussed in previous chapters, the version of history these texts present is closely linked with the social and cultural situation of the time of writing; what Ern Finniss refers to as ‘the spirit of the times’, or the ‘current cultural milieu’ of the writer.⁶ It is also dependent on historiography, although at times historical fiction prefigures developments in written histories, and provides alternative or contestatory views by focusing on the lives of families and children who are (or at least were) frequently overlooked in conventional histories. By concentrating on the details of everyday life – ‘its smells, its tastes, its fashions, its rituals, its words’, to return to Jock Phillips’ phrase⁷ – historical fiction for children is particularly effective in creating a sense of what it was like to live in New Zealand in earlier times. As is the case with postcolonial subaltern studies, fiction which depicts the experiences of women, children, and indigenous people challenges the dominant discourse and creates a more complex, balanced, and human picture of the past. The reliability of the ‘history’ transmitted in historical fiction is variable; in some cases the authors are not concerned with verisimilitude, while in others the historical information on which their stories are based, or the contemporary interpretation thereof, has been superseded.

The history of New Zealand from pre-European times to 1900, as it emerges from these texts, is essentially colonial, concerned with the arrival of immigrants and establishment of a colony, the taming of the landscape and its previous inhabitants to create homes in a new country, and the assertion by the settlers of their right to be here. In the books on the pre-European period considered in Chapter Two, the voyages and arrival of the Maori, the displacement of the original inhabitants and the development of the ‘classic’ Maori culture are a paradigm for the European settlement described in later chapters. The pre-contact period is represented nostalgically as a lost golden age, with Maori represented as admirable people living in a close spiritual connection with the land. These texts encourage young New Zealanders of all ethnicities to identify with and take pride in their country’s distant past. These narratives also establish the concept of the right of conquest: the inferior tangata whenua are rightfully displaced by the superior newcomers, and the primitive moa-hunters are overwhelmed by the more technologically advanced Maori.

During the ‘lawless days’ of the early contact period, the process of colonization is disrupted by undesirable elements – convicts, sealers and whalers, and ‘savage’ Maori – but these are either tamed by missionaries, or subdued by the establishment of British rule symbolised by the Treaty of Waitangi. This paves the way for a new wave of immigrants, this time from Britain rather than Polynesia, who repeat the pattern of claiming New Zealand as their home by virtue of a perceived racial and technological superiority. Despite some initial problems in coping with the unfamiliar and sometimes hostile terrain and indigenous inhabitants, the settlers soon establish homes and farms modelled on those of their home countries. The New Zealand Wars confirm the settlers’ right of occupation, and after the (inevitable) victory of the colonial forces, cordial race relations are resumed. The gold rushes are notable chiefly for the opportunity they offer for young immigrants to gain sufficient wealth to buy into the pastoral dream. For the young colonials of the books discussed in Chapter Eight, New Zealand is their place of habitation: in spite of natural hazards such as eruptions, and the hard work needed for survival, they have learned ‘the arts of Living’ here, and achieved a state of ‘colonial being’.⁸

The young protagonists of New Zealand historical novels set during the twentieth century (listed in Appendix One) are removed, often by several generations, from the first settlers, and regard themselves as the natural occupants of this country. Consequently, the unifying theme of arrival in New Zealand and the creation of a new colony which dominated historical novels set prior to 1900 no longer applies. As indicated in the Introduction, these novels are not included in this thesis, but my preliminary studies suggest that a major theme of historical fiction set during the twentieth century is the development of a distinctive New Zealand identity, independent of Britain and the Empire, chiefly through the depiction of significant events which are seen as shaping or defining the national character. The history of New Zealand during the twentieth century, particularly in books published since 2000, is depicted mainly as a series of disasters: natural (the Napier earthquake and Tangiwai); maritime (the sinking of the *Wahine*); medical (the 1918 Spanish influenza outbreak and the 1950s polio epidemic); economic (the Depression); and political (the sinking of the *Rainbow Warrior*).⁹ Divisive episodes such as the 1951

Watersiders' Dispute, the Vietnam War and the 1981 Springbok Tour also appear in fiction. The First and Second World Wars, which are widely accepted as major contributors to New Zealand's sense of national identity, are the subject of a number of historical novels. Some of these deal with New Zealanders fighting overseas, while others describe such things as the jingoism and xenophobia engendered by World War I and the impact of the arrival of American GIs during World War II. These books examine this country's relationship with Britain, and the loosening of New Zealand's traditional ties with 'Home'. Although much of the history of New Zealand in the twentieth century appears in historical fiction to consist of crises and catastrophes, these negative events are used to illustrate positive aspects of the national psyche. The courage, resourcefulness and resilience of individual protagonists are extrapolated onto society as a whole, and overall the picture which emerges from these books is of the evolution of a distinctive society with enlightened views on such issues as apartheid and nuclear weapons.

As the foregoing summaries suggest, the 'grand narrative' of New Zealand history as presented in historical fiction for children is progressivist and melioristic. Bradford notes that one of the 'cultural givens' of settler society children's texts is that 'colonization, even though it involved violence and suffering for indigenous peoples, was to be equated with progress'.¹⁰ The novels considered in this thesis thus chart New Zealand's evolution from 'savagery' to 'civilisation'; from the primitive society of pre-European times to an advanced and superior Western culture. In spite of some regrets for the disappearance of the indigenous way of life, this process is seen as both inevitable and desirable. In historical fiction set during the twentieth century, New Zealand is shown to progress from dependence on Britain to political and cultural autonomy; and from the conservative, racist, and sexist society of the past to one which is more egalitarian, multi-cultural, and inclusive. While some texts offer a less optimistic reading, the underlying premise of children's historical fiction is that the events of the past lead to a more perfect future, and that every age will be better than the last.

Canadian critic Rod McGillis suggests that the 'manner in which we construct the past informs our sense of what we wish the future to be'.¹¹ The concept of New

Zealand's future envisaged in works of historical fiction continues to evolve. Victorian novelists expected New Zealand to remain a British colony, predominantly white, middle-class and Protestant, and to become 'an orderly, pakeha-dominated outpost of imperial civilization',¹² in which Maori had either been assimilated or had died out. Historical fiction written during the first half of the twentieth century assumed that in future New Zealand would have its own identity, distinct from that of Britain, but that it would still be a predominantly Pakeha society, with clearly defined roles for Maori, women and the lower classes. More recent novels envisage this country's future as a secular, ethnically diverse society, in which all New Zealanders enjoy equal opportunities, irrespective of race, gender or social status. McGillis sees these constructions (and reconstructions) of the way things were, and the way we would like them to be, as critical: 'We choose our pasts and in doing so, we shape our present and future.'¹³

Katherine Mansfield expressed very similar ideas when she wrote of New Zealand 'Making its own history, slowly and clumsily/Piecing together this and that, finding the pattern, solving the problem,/Like a child with a box of bricks'.¹⁴ Each generation of historians and writers solves the problem in a different way, so that the pattern created from the box of bricks is continually being remade. The pattern of our history that is transmitted to young New Zealanders in their formative years is crucial, as it can create an impression of the past that is difficult to change and may have a lasting impact on attitudes and actions. Historical novels, which package pieces of the past in an attractive fictional wrapping, are especially well suited to transmitting particular versions of history in a memorable form, and their influence can be life-long. The significance of New Zealand historical fiction for children and young people lies not merely in what it tells young readers about the past, but in what it reveals about our society in the present, and the potential it has to affect the New Zealand of the future.

¹ Roderick McGillis, 'The Opportunity to Choose a Past: Remembering History', *Children's Literature Association Quarterly* 25.1 (2000), 49-55(p.50).

² Gibbons, 'Non-Fiction', p.55.

³ Gilderdale, 'Children's Literature', p.545.

⁴ Rubio, p.228.

⁵ Locke, 'Children's Historical Fiction in New Zealand', p.7.

⁶ Finnis, p.105.

⁷ Phillips, p.332.

⁸ Orwin, *Out of Tune*, p.112; Turner, p.39.

⁹ According to Annette Bisman, one of the editors of the Scholastic 'My Story' series, 'It seems that "disasters" are more popular than stories of the people that settled New Zealand or particular events in history. [...] National disasters are also discussed in schools.' Email 28 April 2009.

¹⁰ Bradford, *Unsettling Narratives*, p.24.

¹¹ McGillis, 'The Opportunity to Choose a Past', p.50.

¹² Beets, p.305.

¹³ McGillis, 'The Opportunity to Choose a Past', p.50.

¹⁴ *Anthology of New Zealand Poetry in English*, p.474.

APPENDIX ONE

NEW ZEALAND HISTORICAL NOVELS FOR CHILDREN 1892-2008 IN ORDER OF PUBLICATION

1800s

- Aylmer, J. E., *Distant Homes; or, the Graham Family in New Zealand*, illus. by J. Jackson (London: Griffith, Farran, Browne, 1862)
- Kingston, William Henry Giles, *Holmwood; or, the New Zealand Settler*, illus. by J. Jackson (London: Griffith, Farran, Browne, 1896)
- Kingston, William Henry Giles, *Waihoura; or, The New Zealand Girl*, illus. unknown (London: Gall & Inglis, 1873) [1905]
- Marryat, Emilia, *Amongst the Maoris: A Book of Adventure*, illus. by Gunston (London: Warne, 1875?)
- Elwell, Ernest Simeon, *The Boy Colonists; or, Eight Years of Colonial Life in New Zealand* (Oxford: Simpkin, Marshall, 1878)
- Cupples, Mrs George, *The Redfords: An Emigrant Story*, illus. unknown (London: Blackie, 1886)
- Henty, George Alfred, *Maori and Settler: A Story of the New Zealand War*, illus. by Alfred Pearse (London: Blackie and Son, 1891) [1911]
- Forde, H. A., *Across Two Seas: A New Zealand Tale*, illus. unknown (London: Wells Gardner Darton, 1894)
- Stredder, Eleanor, *Doing and Daring: A New Zealand Story*, illus. by A. Rhind (London: Nelson, 1899)

1900s

- Horsley, Reginald, *In the Grip of the Hawk*, illus. by W. Herbert Holloway (London: T. C. & E. C. Jack, 1907)
- Storer, H. C., *The Boy Settler* (London: The Religious Tract Society, 1907)

1910s

- Satchell, William, *The Greenstone Door* (London: Sidgwick & Jackson, 1914)
- Bedford, H. Louisa, *Under One Standard; or, The Touch that Makes Us Kin*, illus. by Harold Piffard (London, S.P.C.K., 1916)

1920s

- Tracy, Mona, *Rifle and Tomahawk*, illus. by G. Harry Evison (Christchurch: Whitcombe & Tombs, 1927) [New ed. illus. by Alan Gilderdale (Auckland: Hodder and Stoughton, 1983)]
- Tracy, Mona, *Lawless Days*, illus. by G. Harry Evison (Christchurch: Whitcombe & Tombs, 1928)
- Peacocke, Isabel Maud, *The Runaway Princess* (London: Ward Lock, 1929)

1930s

- Acheson, Frank, *Plume of the Arawas* (Wellington: Reed, 1930)
- Stuckey, A. W., *The Story of Kawau and the Moriori*, illus. unknown (Auckland: Queen City Press, 1930)
- Tracy, Mona, *Martin Thorn – Adventurer*, illus. by Terence Cuneo (Christchurch: Whitcombe & Tombs, 1930)

- Harper, Theodore and Winifred, *Windy Island* (London: Hutchinson, 1934)
 Howes, Edith, *Young Pioneers*, illus. unknown (Christchurch: Whitcombe & Tombs, 1934)
 Ewing, John, *Pitama*, illus. by Russell Clark (Wellington: Reed, 1938)
 Harper, Theodore, *Seventeen Chimneys* (New York: Viking, 1938)

1940s

1950s

- Audley, E. H., *Islands Float at Eleven*, illus. by L. C. Mitchell (Wellington: A. H. & A. W. Reed, 1952)
 Syme, Ronald, *Gipsy Michael*, illus. by William Stobbs (London: Hodder & Stoughton, 1954)
 Soper, Eileen, *Young Jane*, illus. by Evelyn Clouston (Christchurch: Whitcombe & Tombs, 1955)
 Crisp, Frank, *Maori Jack's Monster* (London: Hodder & Stoughton, 1956)
 Syme, Ronald, *The Spaniards Came at Dawn*, illus. by William Stobbs (London: Hodder & Stoughton, 1959)
 Tindale, Norman B. and Harold Lindsay, *Rangatira*, illus. by Douglas F. Maxted (Wellington: Reed, 1959)

1960s

- Grayland, Valerie, *John and Hoani*, illus. by Anne Linton (London: Blackie, 1962)
 Park, Ruth, *Uncle Matt's Mountain*, illus. by Laurence Broderick (London: Macmillan, 1962)
 Manson, Cecil and Celia, *The Lonely One*, illus. by Ian Armour-Chelu (Christchurch: Whitcomb & Tombs, 1963)
 Rose, Lyndon, *The Parting of the Mist* (Brisbane: Jacaranda Press, 1963)
 Sandall, Helen and Elizabeth Henniker Heaton, *The Emigrants*, illus. by Jane Paton (Hamilton: Paul's Book Arcade, 1963)
 Godfrey, Margery, *South for Gold*, illus. by Clyde Pearson (London: Andre Deutsch, 1964)
 Harvey, Norman B., *Any Old Dollars, Mister?* (Hamilton: Paul's Book Arcade, 1964)
 Owens, R. A., *Muskets and Trouble*, illus. by Russell Clark (Wellington: Reed, 1964)
 Finlayson, Roderick, *The Springing Fern*, illus. by Joan Smith (Christchurch: Whitcombe & Tombs, 1965)
 Locke, Elsie, *The Runaway Settlers*, illus. by Anthony Maitland (London: Cape, 1965)
 Manson, Cecil and Celia, *The Adventures of Johnny Van Bart*, illus. by Ian Armour-Chelu (Christchurch: Whitcombe & Tombs, 1965)
 White, Doris, *The Family that Came Back*, illus. by Grace Huxtable (Auckland: Minerva, 1965)
 Combs, F. L., *Ben*, illus. by RC [Russell Clark?] (Auckland: Blackwood & Janet Paul, 1966)
 George, S. C., *Fire in the Bracken* (Leeds: Arnold, 1966)
 Jensen, David, *They Came to Cook Strait*, illus. by Russell Clark (Auckland: Blackwood & Janet Paul, 1966)
 Messenger, A. H., *Children of the Forest*, illus. by the author (Auckland: Blackwood & Janet Paul, 1966)

- Locke, Elsie, *The End of the Harbour*, illus. by Katarina Mataira (Auckland: Blackwood & Janet Paul, 1968)
- Dallas, Ruth, *The Children in the Bush*, illus. by Peter Campbell (London: Methuen, 1969)
- Ellin, E. M., *The Children of Clearwater Bay*, illus. by Garth Tapper (London: Macmillan, 1969)

1970s

- Dallas, Ruth, *The Wild Boy in the Bush*, illus. by Peter Campbell (London: Methuen, 1971)
- *The Big Flood in the Bush*, illus. by Peter Campbell (London: Methuen, 1972)
- de Roo, Anne, *Cinnamon and Nutmeg* (London: Macmillan, 1972)
- Fergusson, Bernard, *Captain John Niven* (Auckland: Collins, 1972)
- Bacon, Ron L., *Again the Bugles Blow*, illus. by V. J. Livingstone (Auckland: Collins, 1973)
- de Roo, Anne, *Mick's Country Cousins* (London: Macmillan, 1974)
- Ellin, E. M., *The Greenstone Axe*, illus. by E. Sutherland (Auckland: Stockton House, 1975)
- Cox, Mary, *Wild Manes in the Afternoon*, illus. by Elaine Power (Auckland: Collins, 1976)
- Holden, Anne Jacqueline, *No Trains at the Bay* (Glasgow: Blackie, 1976)
- Simpson, Roger, and Philippa Mansfield, *Hunter's Gold*, illus. with photographs from the television series (Auckland: Heinemann, 1976)
- Sutton, Eve, *Green Gold*, illus. by Paul Wright (London: Hamish Hamilton, 1976)
- Murison, Barbara, *Buster Bee Stories*, illus. by Judith Trevelyan (Wellington: Price Milburn, 1977)
- Sutton, Eve, *Tuppenny Brown*, illus. by Paul Wright (London: Hamish Hamilton, 1977)
- *Johnny Sweep*, illus. by Paul Wright (London: Hamish Hamilton, 1977)
- Simpson, Roger and Merv Dykes, *Gather Your Dreams* (Auckland: Collins, 1978)
- Sutton, Eve, *Moa Hunter*, illus. by Bernard Brett (London: Hamish Hamilton, 1978)
- Dallas, Ruth, *Shining Rivers*, illus. by Gareth Floyd (Auckland: Methuen, 1979)
- de Roo, Anne, *Traveller* (London: Heinemann, 1979)
- Saunders, G. K., *The Forest Rangers* (Christchurch: Whitcoulls, 1979)

1980s

- de Roo, Anne, *Because of Rosie* (London: Heinemann, 1980)
- Gibson, Gloria, *Mouse in the Attic*, illus. by Dick Frizzell (Auckland: Methuen, 1980)
- Johnston, Phyllis, *No One Went to Town*, illus. by Christine Brown (Wellington: Price Milburn, 1980)
- *Black Boots and Buttonhooks*, illus. by Ernest Papps (Wellington: Price Milburn, 1982)
- Orwin, Joanna, *Ihaka and the Summer Wandering*, illus. by Robyn Kahukiwa (Auckland: Oxford University Press, 1982)
- Beames, Margaret, *Hidden Valley*, illus. by Michael Dee (Wellington: Mallinson Rendell, 1983)
- Dallas, Ruth, *Holiday Time in the Bush*, illus. by Gary Hebley (London: Methuen, 1983)
- de Roo, Anne, *Jacky Nobody* (Auckland: Methuen, 1983)

- Dunlop, Beverly, *The Poetry Girl* (Auckland: Hodder & Stoughton, 1983)
- Gibson, Gloria, *Mouse in School*, illus. by Gary Hebley (Auckland: Methuen, 1983)
- Locke, Elsie, *Journey Under Warning*, illus. by Margaret Chapman; maps by Libby Plumridge (Auckland: Oxford University Press, 1983)
- Sutton, Eve, *Surgeon's Boy*, illus. by Fiona Kelly (Wellington: Mallinson Rendell, 1983)
- Dunlop, Beverly, *Earthquake Town*, illus. by Garry Meeson (Auckland: Hodder & Stoughton, 1984)
- Locke, Elsie, *A Canoe in the Mist*, illus. by John Shelley (London: Cape, 1984)
- Owen, Winifred, *Captives and Castaways*, illus. by Jean Oates (Wellington: Price Milburn, 1984)
- Orwin, Joanna, *Ihaka and the prophecy*, illus. by Robyn Kahukiwa (Auckland: Oxford University Press, 1984)
- Gadd, Bernard, *Laya* (Auckland: Te Ropu Kahurangi, 1985)
- Johnston, Phyllis, *A Comet in the Sky*, illus. by Adriana Tuscia (Tauranga: Moana Press, 1985)
- Miller, Grant Hindin, *The Dream Monger*, illus. by Steve Dickinson (Auckland: Hodder & Stoughton, 1985)
- Orwin, Joanna, *The Guardian of the Land* (Auckland: Oxford University Press, 1985)
- Beames, Margaret, *The Parkhurst Boys*, illus. by Susan Opie (Wellington: Mallinson Rendell, 1986)
- de Roo, Anne, *The Bat's Nest* (Auckland: Hodder & Stoughton, 1986)
- Gee, Maurice, *The Fire-Raiser* (Harmondsworth: Puffin, 1986)
- Duder, Tessa, *Alex* (Auckland: Penguin, 1987)
- Gadd, Bernard, *Dare Not Fail* (Auckland: Te Ropu Kahurangi, 1987)
- Sutton, Eve, *Valley of Heavenly Gold* (Wellington: Mallinson Rendell, 1987)
- Dunlop, Beverley, *Spirits of the Lake* (Auckland: Hodder & Stoughton, 1988)
- Gee, Maurice, *The Champion* (Harmondsworth: Puffin, 1989)
- Johnston, Phyllis, *...then there were Nine* (Tauranga: Moana Press, 1989)
- Rountree, Kathryn, *Jessie Jenkin's Diary*, illus. by Gary Hebley (Auckland: Longman Paul, 1989)

1990s

- Lasenby, Jack, *The Mangrove Summer* (Auckland: Ashton Scholastic, 1990)
- Whitehouse, Eliane, *Woodsmoke* (Auckland: Ashton Scholastic, 1990)
- de Roo, Anne, *Sergeant Sal* (Auckland: Random Century, 1991)
- Duder, Tessa, *Alex in Winter* (Auckland: Penguin, 1991)
- Gadd, Bernard, *Blood of Tainui* (Auckland: Te Ropu Kahurangi, 1991)
- Duder, Tessa, *Alessandra: Alex in Rome* (Auckland: Penguin, 1992)
- *Songs for Alex* (Auckland: Oxford University Press, 1992)
- Johnston, Phyllis, *No Lily-livered Girl* (Auckland: Waiatarua, 1992)
- Hall, Margaret, *Swag and Tucker* (Dunedin: McIndoe, 1993)
- Gee, Maurice, *The Fat Man* (Auckland: Penguin, 1994)
- Lasenby, Jack, *Deadman's Head* (Dunedin: McIndoe, 1994)
- *The Waterfall* (Dunedin: Longacre, 1995)
- Bell, Zana, *The Tides of Time* (Auckland: Scholastic, 1996)
- Lasenby, Jack, *The Battle of Pook Island* (Dunedin: Longacre, 1996)
- Taylor, William, *Circles* (Auckland: Penguin, 1996)
- Whitehouse, Eliane, *Young Exile* (Auckland: Scholastic, 1996)

- Lambie, Barbara Letitia, *Tarore's Book*, illus. by P. G. Rob [Robyn MacIntosh-Handtschoewercker] (Christchurch: Trinity Publishing, 1997)
 Gee, Maurice, *Orchard Street* (Auckland: Viking, 1998)
 – *Hostel Girl* (Auckland: Puffin, 1999)

2000-2008

- Pulford, Elizabeth, *Call of the Cruins* (Auckland: Scholastic, 2000)
 Hill, David, *The Name of the Game* (Wellington: Mallinson Rendell, 2001)
 Catran, Ken, *Letters from the Coffin Trenches* (Auckland: Random House, 2002)
 Duder, Tessa, *Tiggie Tompson All at Sea* (Auckland: Penguin, 2002)
 Duvall, Stu, *Achtung! Pavlova* (Auckland: Reed, 2002)
 Ell, Sarah, *When the War Came Home* (Auckland: Scholastic, 2002)
 Batistich, Amelia, *A Better Life: The Diary of Ivana Ivanovich, Dargaville, 1924-25* (Auckland: Scholastic, 2003)
 Beckett, Bernard, *Home Boys* (Dunedin: Longacre, 2003)
 Catran, Ken *Jacko Moran, Sniper* (Melbourne: Lothian, 2003)
 – *Lin and the Red Stranger* (Auckland: Random House, 2003)
 Corlett, Shirley, *Abandon Ship! The Diary of Debbie Atherton, Wellington, 1968* (Auckland: Scholastic, 2003)
 Hill, David, *No Safe Harbour* (Wellington: Mallinson Rendell, 2003)
 – *Journey to Tangiwai: The Dairy of Peter Cotterill, Napier, 1953* (Auckland: Scholastic, 2003)
 Beale, Fleur, *A New Song in the Land: The Writings of Atapo, Paihia, c.1840* (Auckland: Scholastic, 2004)
 Cartwright, Pauline, *Finding Father: The Journal of Mary Brogan, Otago, 1862* (Auckland: Scholastic, 2004)
 Catran, Ken, *Robert Moran, Private* (Melbourne: Lothian, 2004)
 – *Seal Boy* (Auckland: Random House, 2004)
 Catran, Wendy, *The Swap* (Melbourne: Lothian, 2004)
 Corlett, Shirley, *You've got Guts, Kenny Melrose* (Auckland: Scholastic, 2004)
 Cowley, Joy, *Hunter* (Auckland: Penguin, 2004)
 Johnston, Phyllis, *The Fugitive Soldier* (Auckland: Polygraphia, 2004)
 McVeagh, Janine, *Earthquake! The Diary of Katie Bourke, Napier, 1930-31* (Auckland: Scholastic, 2004)
 Orman, Lorraine, *Cross Tides* (Dunedin: Longacre, 2004)
 Orwin, Joanna, *Out of Tune* (Dunedin: Longacre, 2004)
 Beaglehole, Helen, *War Zones* (Wellington: Steel Roberts, 2005)
 Bennett, Jean, *Below the Mountains: The Diary of Amy McDonald, Milford Road, 1935-36* (Auckland: Scholastic, 2005)
 Catran, Ken, *Jimmy Moran – Regular* (Melbourne: Lothian, 2005)
 Corlett, Shirley, *Fire in the Sky: The Diary of James Collier, Tarawera, 1886* (Auckland: Scholastic, 2005)
 Lasenby, Jack, *Mr Bluenose* (Dunedin: Longacre, 2005)
 Ng, Eva Wong, *Chinatown Girl: The Diary of Silvey Chan, Auckland, 1942* (Auckland: Scholastic, 2005)
 Orman, Lorraine, *A Long Way from Home: The Diary of Lilian Glenmore, Warkworth, 1943* (Auckland: Scholastic, 2005)
 Smith, Phil, *The Unknown Zone* (Auckland: Random House, 2005)

- Taylor, William, *Land of Milk and Honey* (Auckland: Harper Collins, 2005)
- Beale, Fleur, *A Respectable Girl* (Auckland: Random House, 2006)
- Brassell, Jill, *Aquarius, My Ohu Year: The Diary of Starshine Penney, 1975* (Auckland: Scholastic, 2006)
- Catran, Ken, *Red Leader Down* (Auckland: Random House, 2006)
- Delamain, Brenda, *Lizzie, love*, illus. by the author (Dunedin: Longacre, 2006)
- Mayberry, Sarah, *The Lost Children* (Auckland: Puffin, 2006)
- Morris-Bensemam, Leone, *Escape from Sarau: The Diary of Emilie Ritter, Nelson, 1882-83* (Auckland: Scholastic, 2006)
- O'Brien, Bill, *Castaway; The Diary of Samuel Abraham Clark, Disappointment Island, 1907* (Auckland: Scholastic, 2006)
- Catran, Ken, *Teresa Moran – Soldier* (Melbourne: Lothian, 2007)
- Davies, Celia, *Shadow of the Whale* (Auckland: Reed, 2007)
- Johnston, Phyllis, *Dead Dan's Dee* (Dunedin: Longacre, 2007)
- Nagelkerke, Bill, *Sitting on the Fence: The Diary of Martin Daly, Christchurch, 1981* (Auckland: Scholastic, 2007)
- Orwin, Joanna, *Kauri in My Blood: The Diary of Laura Ann Findlay, the Coromandel, 1921-24* (Auckland: Scholastic, 2007)
- Beattie, Kath, *Poor Man's Gold: The Diary of Reuben Radcliffe, Northland, 1899-1900* (Auckland: Scholastic, 2008)
- Holt, Sharon, *Sabotage! The Diary of Rowan Webb, Auckland, 1985* (Auckland: Scholastic, 2008)
- McVeagh, Janine, *Be Counted: The Diary of Amy Phelps, Dunedin, 1893* (Auckland: Scholastic, 2008)
- Orman, Lorraine, *Land of Promise: The Diary of William Donahue, Gravesend to Wellington, 1839-1840* (Auckland: Scholastic, 2008)
- Werry, Philippa, *Enemy at the Gate* (Auckland: Scholastic, 2008)

HISTORICAL NOVELS SET PRIOR TO 1900 BY PERIOD/TOPIC

Those marked with an asterisk deal with more than one period/topic.

Pre-European

Canoe voyages/arrival in New Zealand

Gadd, Bernard, *Laya* (Auckland: Te Ropu Kahurangi, 1985)

Tindale, Norman B. and Harold Lindsay, *Rangatira*, illus. by Douglas F. Maxted (Wellington: Reed, 1959)

Moa Hunters

Stuckey, A. W., *The Story of Kawau and the Moriori*, illus. unknown (Auckland: Queen City Press, 1930)

Sutton, Eve, *Moa Hunter*, illus. by Bernard Brett (London: Hamish Hamilton, 1978)

Orwin, Joanna, *Ihaka and the Summer Wandering*, illus. by Robyn Kahukiwa (Auckland: Oxford University Press, 1982)

– *Ihaka and the prophecy*, illus. by Robyn Kahukiwa (Auckland: Oxford University Press, 1984)

Tribal period

Acheson, Frank, *Plume of the Arawas* (Wellington: Reed, 1930)

Gadd, Bernard, *Dare Not Fail* (Auckland: Te Ropu Kahurangi, 1987)

Early contact

Syme, Ronald, *The Spaniards Came at Dawn*, illus. by William Stobbs (London: Hodder & Stoughton, 1959)

Tracy, Mona, *Lawless Days*, illus. by G. Harry Evison (Christchurch: Whitcombe & Tombs, 1928)

– *Martin Thorn – Adventurer*, illus. by Terence Cuneo (Christchurch: Whitcombe & Tombs, 1930)

Ewing, John, *Pitama*, illus. by Russell Clark (Wellington: Reed, 1938)

Grayland, Valerie, *John and Hoani*, illus. by Anne Linton (London: Blackie, 1962)

Manson, Cecil and Celia, *The Adventures of Johnny Van Bart*, illus. by Ian Armour-Chelu (Christchurch: Whitcombe & Tombs, 1965)

*Finlayson, Roderick, *The Springing Fern*, illus. by Joan Smith (Christchurch: Whitcombe & Tombs, 1965)

Orwin, Joanna, *The Guardian of the Land* (Auckland: Oxford University Press, 1985)

Lambie, Barbara Letitia, *Tarore's Book*, illus. by P. G. Rob [Robyn MacIntosh-Handtschoewercker] (Christchurch: Trinity Publishing, 1997)

Pulford, Elizabeth, *Call of the Cruins* (Auckland: Scholastic, 2000)

Catran, Ken, *Seal Boy* (Auckland: Random House, 2004)

Cowley, Joy, *Hunter* (Auckland: Penguin, 2004)

Orman, Lorraine, *Cross Tides* (Dunedin: Longacre, 2004)

Beale, Fleur, *A New Song in the Land: The Writings of Atapo, Paihia, c.1840* (Auckland: Scholastic, 2004)

Smith, Phil, *The Unknown Zone* (Auckland: Random House, 2005)

Delamain, Brenda, *Lizzie, love*, illus. by the author (Dunedin: Longacre, 2006)

Davies, Celia, *Shadow of the Whale* (Auckland: Reed, 2007)

Immigration – Victorian and Early Twentieth Century

- Aylmer, J. E., *Distant Homes; or, the Graham Family in New Zealand*, illus. by J. Jackson (London: Griffith, Farran, Browne, 1862)
- Kingston, William Henry Giles, *Holmwood; or, the New Zealand Settler*, illus. by J. Jackson (London: Griffith, Farran, Browne, 1896)
- Kingston, William Henry Giles, *Waihoura; or, The New Zealand Girl*, illus. unknown (London: Gall & Inglis, 1873) [1905]
- Marryat, Emilia, *Amongst the Maoris: A Book of Adventure*, illus. by Gunston (London: Warne, 1875?)
- Elwell, Ernest Simeon, *The Boy Colonists; or, Eight Years of Colonial Life in New Zealand* (Oxford: Simpkin, Marshall, 1878)
- Cupples, Mrs George, *The Redfords: An Emigrant Story*, illus. unknown (London: Blackie, 1886)
- *Henty, George Alfred, *Maori and Settler: A Story of the New Zealand War*, illus. by Alfred Pearse (London: Blackie and Son, 1891) [1911]
- Forde, H. A., *Across Two Seas: A New Zealand Tale*, illus. unknown (London: Wells Gardner Darton, 1894)
- *Stredder, Eleanor, *Doing and Daring: A New Zealand Story*, illus. by A. Rhind (London: Nelson, 1899)
- Storer, H. C., *The Boy Settler* (London: The Religious Tract Society, 1907)
- *Bedford, H. Louisa, *Under One Standard; or, The Touch that Makes Us Kin: A Story of the Time of the Maori War*, illus. by Harold Piffard (London: Society for Promoting Christian Knowledge, 1916)

Immigration – Twentieth and Twenty-first Century

- Howes, Edith, *Young Pioneers*, illus. unknown (Christchurch: Whitcombe & Tombs, 1934)
- Crisp, Frank, *Maori Jack's Monster* (London: Hodder & Stoughton, 1956)
- Sandall, Helen and Elizabeth Henniker Heaton, *The Emigrants*, illus. by Jane Paton (Hamilton: Paul's Book Arcade, 1963)
- Locke, Elsie, *The Runaway Settlers*, illus. by Anthony Maitland (London: Cape, 1965)
- *George, S. C., *Fire in the Bracken* (Leeds: Arnold, 1966)
- Jensen, David, *They Came to Cook Strait*, illus. by Russell Clark (Auckland: Blackwood & Janet Paul, 1966)
- Fergusson, Bernard, *Captain John Niven* (Auckland: Collins, 1972)
- Sutton, Eve, *Green Gold*, illus. by Paul Wright (London: Hamish Hamilton, 1976)
- *Tuppenny Brown*, illus. by Paul Wright (London: Hamish Hamilton, 1977)
- *Johnny Sweep*, illus. by Paul Wright (London: Hamish Hamilton, 1977)
- *Surgeon's Boy*, illus. by Fiona Kelly (Wellington: Mallinson Rendell, 1983)
- de Roo, Anne, *Traveller* (London: Heinemann, 1979)
- Beames, Margaret, *The Parkhurst Boys*, illus. by Susan Opie (Wellington: Mallinson Rendell, 1986)
- Rountree, Kathryn, *Jessie Jenkin's Diary*, illus. by Gary Hebley (Auckland: Longman Paul, 1989)
- Taylor, William, *Circles* (Auckland: Penguin, 1996)
- Whitehouse, Élaïne, *Young Exile* (Auckland: Scholastic, 1996)

- Duder, Tessa, *Tiggie Tompson All at Sea* (Auckland: Penguin, 2002)
 Orwin, Joanna, *Out of Tune* (Dunedin: Longacre, 2004)
 Mayberry, Sarah, *The Lost Children* (Auckland: Puffin, 2006)

The New Zealand Wars

- *Henty, George Alfred, *Maori and Settler: A Story of the New Zealand War*, illus. by Alfred Pearse (London: Blackie and Son, 1891) [1911]
 Horsley, Reginald, *In the Grip of the Hawk*, illus. by W. Herbert Holloway (London: T. C. & E. C. Jack, 1907)
 Satchell, William, *The Greenstone Door* (London: Sidgwick & Jackson, 1914)
 *Bedford, H. Louisa, *Under One Standard; or, The Touch that Makes Us Kin: A Story of the Time of the Maori War*, illus. by Harold Piffard (London: Society for Promoting Christian Knowledge, 1916)
 Tracy, Mona, *Rifle and Tomahawk*, illus. by G. Harry Evison (Christchurch: Whitcombe & Tombs, 1927) [New ed. illus. by Alan Gilderdale (Auckland: Hodder and Stoughton, 1983)]
 *Syme, Ronald, *Gipsy Michael*, illus. by William Stobbs (London: Hodder & Stoughton, 1954)
 Owens, R. A., *Muskets and Trouble*, illus. by Russell Clark (Wellington: Reed, 1964)
 *Finlayson, Roderick, *The Springing Fern*, illus. by Joan Smith (Christchurch: Whitcombe & Tombs, 1965)
 *George, S. C., *Fire in the Bracken* (Leeds: Arnold, 1966)
 Messenger, A. H., *Children of the Forest*, illus. by the author (Auckland: Blackwood & Janet Paul, 1966)
 Locke, Elsie, *The End of the Harbour*, illus. by Katarina Mataira (Auckland: Blackwood & Janet Paul, 1968)
 Bacon, Ron L., *Again, the Bugles Blow*, illus. by V. J. Livingston (Auckland: Collins, 1973)
 Saunders, G. K. *The Forest Rangers* (Christchurch: Whitcoulls, 1979)
 Locke, Elsie, *Journey Under Warning*, illus. by Margaret Chapman; maps by Libby Plumridge (Auckland: Oxford University Press, 1983)
 de Roo, Anne, *Jacky Nobody* (Auckland: Methuen, 1983)
 – *The Bat's Nest* (Auckland: Hodder & Stoughton, 1986)
 Dunlop, Beverley, *Spirits of the Lake* (Auckland: Hodder & Stoughton, 1988)
 Gadd, Bernard, *Blood of Tainui* (Auckland: Te Ropu Kahurangi, 1991)
 *Beale, Fleur, *A Respectable Girl* (Auckland: Random House, 2006)

The Gold Rushes

- *Harper, Theodore, *Seventeen Chimneys* (New York: Viking, 1938)
 *Syme, Ronald, *Gipsy Michael*, illus. by William Stobbs (London: Hodder & Stoughton, 1954)
 Godfrey, Margery, *South for Gold*, illus. by Clyde Pearson (London: Andre Deutsch, 1964)
 Simpson, Roger, *Hunter's Gold*, illus. with photographs from the television series (Auckland: Heinemann, 1976)
 Dallas, Ruth, *Shining Rivers*, illus. by Gareth Floyd (Auckland: Methuen, 1979)
 Sutton, Eve, *Valley of Heavenly Gold* (Wellington: Mallinson Rendell, 1987)

- Catran, Ken, *Lin and the Red Stranger* (Auckland: Random House, 2003)
 Cartwright, Pauline, *Finding Father: The Journal of Mary Brogan, Otago, 1862*
 (Auckland: Scholastic, 2004)

Colonial Period

- Peacocke, Isabel Maud, *The Runaway Princess* (London: Ward Lock, 1929)
 Harper, Theodore and Winifred, *Windy Island* (London: Hutchinson, 1934)
 *Harper, Theodore, *Seventeen Chimneys* (New York: Viking, 1938)
 Soper, Eileen, *Young Jane*, illus. by Evelyn Clouston (Christchurch: Whitcombe & Tombs, 1955)
 Manson, Cecil and Celia, *The Lonely One*, illus. by Ian Armour-Chelu (Christchurch: Whitcomb & Tombs, 1963)
 Combs, F. L., *Ben*, illus. by R. C [Russell Clark?] (Auckland: Blackwood & Janet Paul, 1966)
 Ellin, E.M., *The Children of Clearwater Bay*, illus. by Garth Tapper (London: Macmillan, 1969)
 Dallas, Ruth, *The Children in the Bush*, illus. by Peter Campbell (London: Methuen, 1969)
 – *The Wild Boy in the Bush*, illus. by Peter Campbell (London: Methuen, 1971)
 – *The Big Flood in the Bush*, illus. by Peter Campbell (London: Methuen, 1972)
 Ellin, E. M., *The Greenstone Axe*, illus. by Elizabeth Sutherland (Auckland: Stockton House, 1975)
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 Park, Ruth, *Uncle Matt's Mountain*, illus. by Laurence Broderick (London: Macmillan, 1962)
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- Johnston, Phyllis, *No One Went to Town* (Wellington: Price Milburn, 1980)
- *Black Boots and Buttonhooks* (Wellington: Price Milburn, 1982)
 - *A Comet in the Sky* (Tauranga: Moana Press, 1985)
 - *... then there were Nine* (Tauranga: Moana Press, 1989)
 - *No Lily-livered Girl* (Auckland: Waiatarua, 1992)
- Whitehouse, Eliane, *Woodsmoke* (Auckland: Ashton Scholastic, 1990)
- O'Brien, Bill, *Castaway: The Diary of Samuel Abraham Clark, Disappointment Island, 1907* (Auckland: Scholastic, 2006)

First World War

- Gee, Maurice, *The Fire-Raiser* (Harmondsworth: Puffin, 1986)
- Catran, Ken, *Letters from the Coffin Trenches* (Auckland: Random House, 2002)
- Ell, Sarah, *When the War Came Home* (Auckland: Scholastic, 2002)
- Catran, Ken, *Jacko Moran, Sniper* (Melbourne: Lothian, 2003)
- Johnston, Phyllis, *The Fugitive Soldier* (Auckland: Polygraphia, 2004)

Between the Wars

- Rose, Lyndon, *The Parting of the Mist* (Brisbane: Jacaranda Press, 1963)
- Cox, Mary, *Wild Manes in the Afternoon*, illus. by Elaine Power (Auckland: Collins, 1976)
- Murison, Barbara, *Buster Bee Stories*, illus. by Judith Trevelyan (Wellington: Price Milburn, 1977)
- Simpson, Roger and Merv Dykes, *Gather Your Dreams* (Auckland: Collins, 1978)
- Gibson, Gloria, *Mouse in the Attic* (Auckland: Methuen, 1980)
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- *Earthquake Town* (Auckland: Hodder & Stoughton, 1984)
- Miller, Grant Hindin, *The Dream Monger* (Auckland: Hodder & Stoughton, 1985)
- Gee, Maurice, *The Fat Man* (Auckland: Penguin, 1994)
- Lasenby, Jack, *Deadman's Head* (Dunedin: McIndoe, 1994)
- *The Waterfall* (Dunedin: Longacre, 1995)
 - *The Battle of Pook Island* (Dunedin: Longacre, 1996)
- Batistich, Amelia, *A Better Life: The Diary of Ivana Ivanovich, Dargaville, 1924-25* (Auckland: Scholastic, 2003)
- Corlett, Shirley, *You've got Guts, Kenny Melrose* (Auckland: Scholastic, 2004)
- McVeagh, Janine, *Earthquake! The Diary of Katie Bourke, Napier, 1930-31* (Auckland: Scholastic, 2004)

- Bennett, Jean, *Below the Mountains: The Diary of Amy McDonald, Milford Road, 1935-36* (Auckland: Scholastic, 2005)
 Lasenby, Jack, *Mr Bluenose* (Dunedin: Longacre, 2005)
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 Orwin, Joanna, *Kauri in My Blood: The Diary of Laura Ann Findlay, the Coromandel, 1921-24* (Auckland: Scholastic, 2007)

World War II

- Harvey, Norman B., *Any Old Dollars, Mister?* (Hamilton: Paul's Book Arcade, 1964)
 White, Doris, *The Family that Came Back*, illus. by Grace Huxtable (Auckland: Minerva, 1965)
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 Gee, Maurice, *The Champion* (Harmondsworth: Puffin, 1989)
 Lasenby, Jack, *The Mangrove Summer* (Auckland: Ashton Scholastic, 1990)
 Duvall, Stu, *Achtung! Pavlova* (Auckland: Reed, 2002)
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 Catran, Wendy, *The Swap* (Melbourne: Lothian, 2004)
 Beaglehole, Helen, *War Zones* (Wellington: Steel Roberts, 2005)
 Ng, Eva Wong, *Chinatown Girl: The Diary of Silvey Chan, Auckland, 1942* (Auckland: Scholastic, 2005)
 Orman, Lorraine, *A Long Way from Home: The Diary of Lilian Glenmore, Warkworth, 1943* (Auckland: Scholastic, 2005)
 Catran, Ken, *Red Leader Down* (Auckland: Random House, 2006)

Post war - 1950s & 1960s

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 – *Mick's Country Cousins* (London: Macmillan, 1974)
 Duder, Tessa, *Alex* (Auckland: Penguin, 1987)
 – *Alex in Winter* (Auckland: Penguin, 1991)
 – *Alessandra: Alex in Rome* (Auckland: Penguin, 1992)
 – *Songs for Alex* (Auckland: Oxford University Press, 1992)
 Gee, Maurice, *Orchard Street* (Auckland: Viking, 1998)
 – *Hostel Girl* (Auckland: Puffin, 1999)
 Beckett, Bernard, *Home Boys* (Dunedin: Longacre, 2003)
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 Hill, David, *No Safe Harbour* (Wellington: Mallinson Rendell, 2003)
 – *Journey to Tangiwai: The Dairy of Peter Cotterill, Napier, 1953* (Auckland: Scholastic, 2003)
 Taylor, William, *Land of Milk and Honey* (Auckland: Harper Collins, 2005)
 Werry, Philippa, *Enemy at the Gate* (Auckland: Scholastic, 2008)

1970s & 1980s

Hill, David, *The Name of the Game* (Wellington: Mallinson Rendell, 2001)

Catran, Ken, *Jimmy Moran – Regular* (Melbourne: Lothian, 2005)

Brassell, Jill, *Aquarius, My Ohu Year: The Diary of Starshine Penney, 1975*
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Catran, Ken, *Teresa Moran – Soldier* (Melbourne: Lothian, 2007)

Nagelkerke, Bill, *Sitting on the Fence: The Diary of Martin Daly, Christchurch, 1981*
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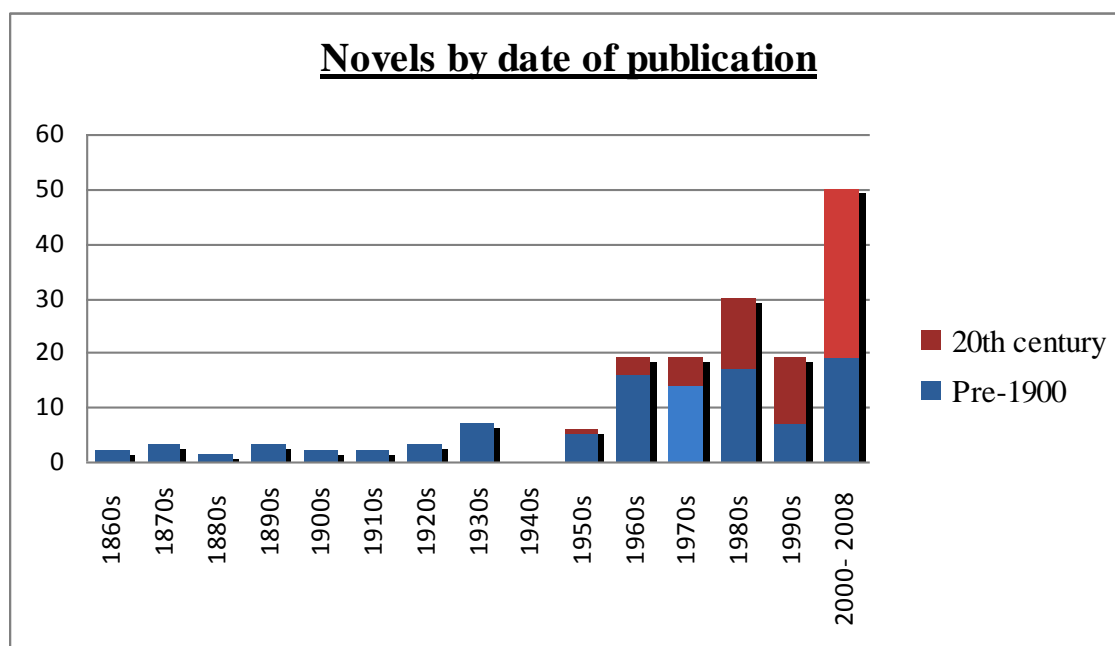
APPENDIX TWO

NEW ZEALAND HISTORICAL NOVELS BY DATE OF PUBLICATION

Novels by date of publication

	Pre-1900	20th century	Total
1860s	2		2
1870s	3		3
1880s	1		1
1890s	3		3
1900s	2		2
1910s	2		2
1920s	3		3
1930s	7		7
1940s			
1950s	5	1	6
1960s	16	3	19
1970s	14	5	19
1980s	17	13	30
1990s	7	12	19
2000- 2008	19	31	50
	101	65	166

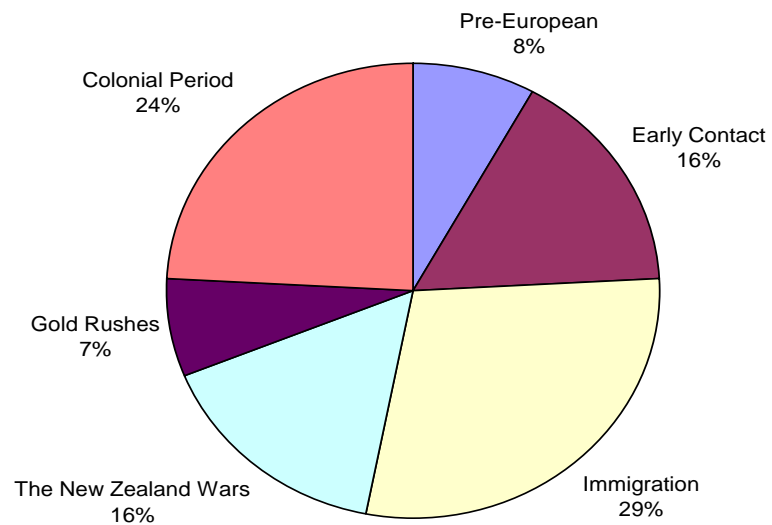
Novels by date of publication



HISTORICAL NOVELS SET PRIOR TO 1900 BY TOPIC/PERIOD

<u>PERIOD</u>	NUMBER OF TEXTS
Pre European	8
Early contact	16.5
Immigration	29
New Zealand Wars	16
Gold Rushes	7
Colonial Period	24.5
	101

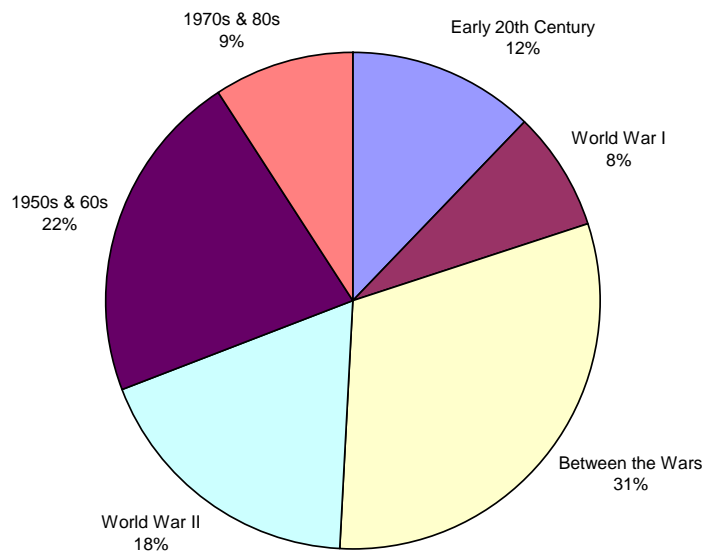
Novels set prior to 1900 by topic/period



NOVELS SET DURING THE TWENTIETH CENTURY BY TOPIC/PERIOD

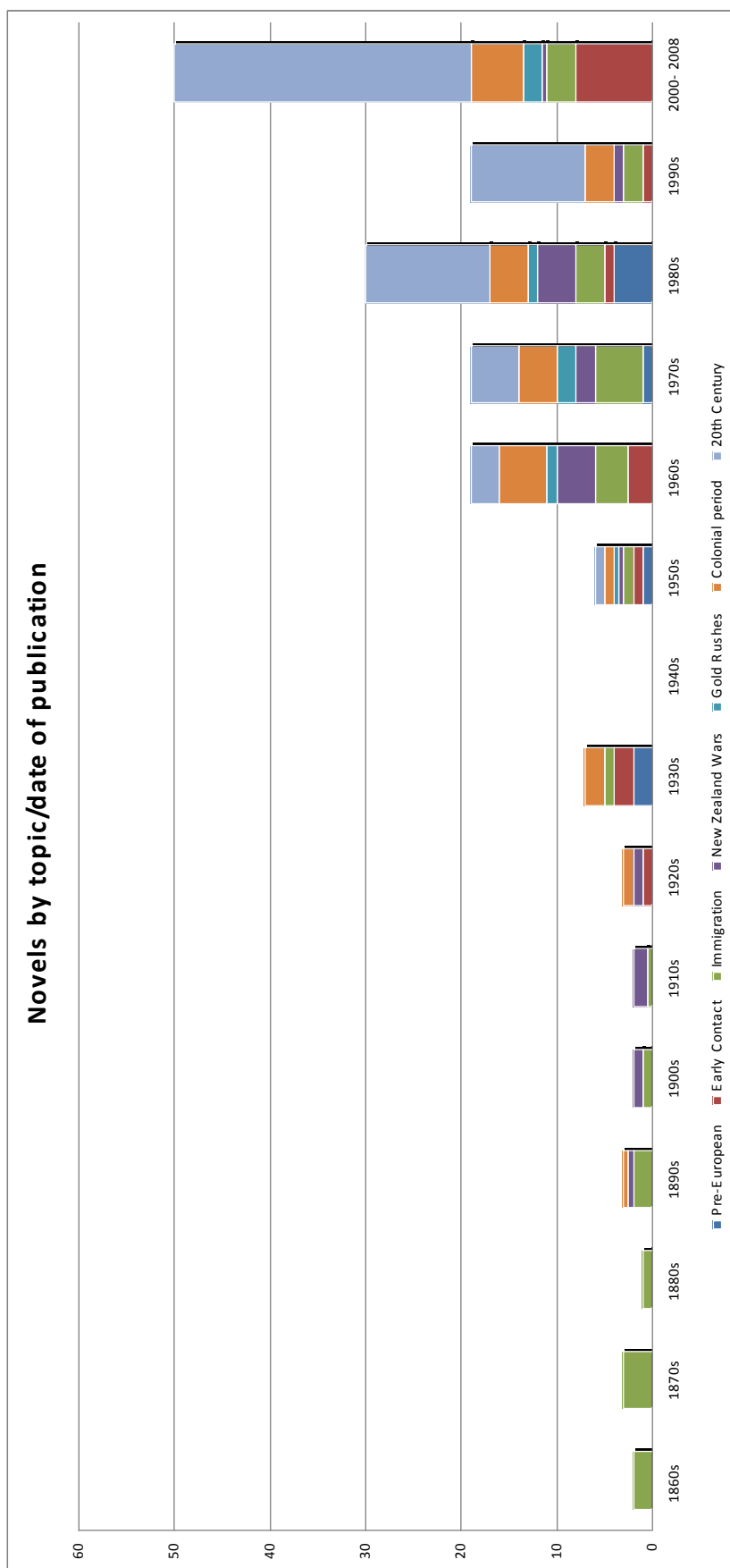
<u>PERIOD</u>	<u>NUMBER OF TEXTS</u>	
Early 20 th Century	8	
World War I	5	
Between the Wars	20	
World War II	12	
1950s & 60s	14	
1970s & 80s	6	
	65	

Novels set during the 20th Century by topic/period



Novels by topic/date of publication

	Pre-European	Early Contact	Immigration	New Zealand Wars	Gold Rushes	Colonial period	20th Century	Total number
1860s	0	0	2	0	0	0	0	2
1870s	0	0	3	0	0	0	0	3
1880s	0	0	1	0	0	0	0	1
1890s	0	0	2	0.5	0	0.5	0	3
1900s	0	0	1	1	0	0	0	2
1910s	0	0	0.5	1.5	0	0	0	2
1920s	0	1		1	0	1	0	3
1930s	2	2	1	0	0	2	0	7
1940s	0	0		0	0	0	0	0
1950s	1	1	1	0.5	0.5	1	1	6
1960s	0	2.5	3.5	4	1	5	3	19
1970s	1	0	5	2	2	4	5	19
1980s	4	1	3	4	1	4	13	30
1990s	0	1	2	1		3	12	19
2000-2008	0	8	3	0.5	2	5.5	31	50
	8	16.5	28	16	6.5	26	65	166



APPENDIX THREE

AUTHOR SURVEY SUMMARY OF FINDINGS

As part of the initial research for this thesis, I asked New Zealand authors of historical fiction for children and young people to complete a written survey on aspects of their writing. They were asked to comment on the historical fiction genre in general, and, more specifically, on their reasons for choosing to write about historical topics; the type of research they engaged in and the resources used; their attitudes to omitting or altering historical facts for narrative purposes; how much they felt their writing was influenced by modern attitudes; and whether they consciously addressed certain social or cultural issues in their books. For ethical reasons, I did not approach the writers directly, but asked publishers to pass the surveys on to authors. Responses were received from ten writers: Fleur Beale, Jean Bennett, Jill Brasell, Ken Catran, Brenda Delamain, Eva Wong Ng, Bill O'Brien, Lorraine Orman, Joanna Orwin, and William Taylor; representing approximately a quarter of the current New Zealand authors of historical fiction for children. I appreciate the often very detailed answers they supplied to my questions.

These authors have a variety of reasons for writing historical novels. For some it is simply an interest in historical events and places, or a childhood enjoyment of historical fiction. Some wrote particular historical novels at their agent's suggestion or as a result of an approach by the publishers of the *My Story* series. Several authors have written books to raise awareness of specific periods of history which they feel should be more widely known; this is the motivation for both Ken Catran's *Seal Boy* and Eva Wong Ng's *Chinatown Girl*. William Taylor's books are inspired in part by his conviction that often 'we are invited to look back on our history through rose-tinted glasses. In *Circles* I attempt to show that our pioneer history could be less than a glorious experience for many. Similarly, in *Land of Milk and Honey*, I also show that the migrant experience could be a grim one.' Lorraine Orman's purpose in writing historical fiction is more idealistic; her intention is to help New Zealand to 'develop its own unique cultural mythology' as distinct from European or Maori

mythologies. ‘We need to tell our children significant stories about people of our past – stories which will bring children closer to understanding what it means to be a New Zealander.’

All of the authors carried out extensive research using a wide range of resources. For example, those used by Jean Bennett for *Below the Mountains*, a novel about the building of the Homer Tunnel during the Depression, include a variety of books and other materials from Ministry of Works libraries, the Hocken and Alexander Turnbull Libraries, the Auckland Institute and Museum, National Archives, Radio New Zealand Sound Archives, AJHR, Parliamentary Debates, Unemployment Board Reports and files, theses, newspapers, internet research, and personal interviews with people who had lived in the place or time in which the book is set. Other writers used similar resources, as well as others specific to their topic or period; for example, Taylor used his own family history; Beale read ‘as much contemporary [1860s] material as possible to get the flavour of the times’; and Catran consulted Richard Dana’s *Two Years Before the Mast* for nineteenth century sailors’ idiom. Both Orwin and Delamain visited the places mentioned in their books to familiarise themselves with the landscape and buildings, and Delamain was able to spend time at the Stone Store and Kemp House in Kerikeri and incorporate into her novel actual books and toys belonging to the Kemp family which are still kept there. Not all researchers were as fortunate; Wong Ng, for example, found it difficult to locate material on the Chinese in Auckland in the 1940s, as Chinese were ‘not significant enough to be considered worthy of historical mention’ in history books.

There is general agreement that historical accuracy is imperative, so that young readers can trust what they read. Taylor observes that there is not much point in telling historical stories if they are not as accurate as possible: ‘I think I worked on the assumption that if I thought I had got things 100% “right”, then my representation was probably 75% accurate.’ However, as Brasell points out, ‘at some point you have to depart from the facts in order to bring your characters into existence and create a plot’. While the main historical facts should be adhered to, ‘there is room for negotiating the line between fact and fiction’; and it is acceptable to invent minor events as long as they are credible and could possibly have happened in that way at

that time. Delamain notes that her historical novel is marketed as fiction and people know they are not buying a history book. (The children who read the book may not be aware of this, however). The writers agree that any significant departures from historical fact need to be acknowledged by the author.

All of the authors consider that their historical fiction accurately represents the values of the time it is set. Orwin, however, adds a proviso, that her representation is ‘as accurate as it can be, given that any writer is unconsciously limited by the experiences and mores of our own time in trying to understand and portray the values of the past.’ There is less agreement about whether the writer’s interpretation of the past is influenced by modern attitudes to such things as race and gender. Half of the writers regarded it as inevitable. According to Brasell, ‘Yes, stories must be influenced by modern attitudes – surely that’s partly the point of historical fiction? To write a story set in, say, 1860, exactly as if it had been *written* in 1860 (assuming such a feat to be possible) would just make it difficult to read, without the compensation of authenticity.’ Beale also thinks that, ‘writing a story that espoused the race and gender attitudes of the time would create a story the modern reader would find it hard to relate to. However, I think it’s possible to remain true to the attitudes by carefully choosing your characters and plot.’ Orman and Delamain both speak of trying to strike a balance between past values and modern opinions. The other writers believe that they are not influenced by modern attitudes. Taylor is particularly vehement on this point: ‘No, no, a thousand times no ... I’d rather die than say “Yes”!’ O’Brien is of the opinion that if an author does research it should not be difficult to separate modern attitudes when interpreting the past. Orwin also says that she tries to accept and present the attitudes of the past as much as possible: ‘Anachronistic imposition of modern values – particularly those reflecting the role of women and racial stereotypes – rather defeats the purpose of setting a story in the past.’

Five of the authors agree that they consciously address certain social and cultural issues in their books. These include such things as gender roles, Maori land issues, conservation, race relations, and personal relationships. For Orman, these are integral parts of the plots of her books. Other authors do not deliberately choose issues to

address, but find that larger themes grow out of the scenarios they are writing about. Taylor states that in writing his books he primarily sets out to entertain, but, ‘that being said, of course there are social and cultural, not so much “issues” as “imperatives” that I hold dear and are close to my being as a person, and I guess they find reflection in what I write.’ Only two of the authors (Beale and O’Brien) believe that they do not consciously address certain social and cultural issues in their books.

Not unexpectedly, the writers were all agreed on the importance of historical fiction for children. Reflecting on her own childhood reading, Delamain said, ‘I learned more history from novels than from history books, the latter just tell you the facts, the former make it come alive.’ Orwin is of the opinion that, ‘Historical fiction – if it’s good enough – is the best and most accessible way of finding out about our past. If we don’t know where we have come from, we can’t make much sense of where we’re going. With New Zealand history seldom taught in schools, our children have little conception of our past.’ These sentiments are echoed by Beale: ‘It’s part of learning who we are and a painless and involving way for kids to learn about where we’ve been and what has made us what we are today.’

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